MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

#430 / MARCH 2019 / $4.99

HETEROFOBIA
COME HOLY SPIRIT
KATASTROV
MOLAR
PERRA VIDA
PORVENIR OSCURO
SIGNAL CRIMES
THE C.I.A.
VITAL IDLES

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Send records, demos, zines, and letters to:
Maximum Rocknroll
PO Box 460760
San Francisco, CA 94146

Send interviews, articles, scene reports, photos, and ads to:
mrr@maximumrocknroll.com

Call us on the phone between 12PM and 7PM PST at (415) 923-9814

More information at our website:
maximumrocknroll.com

TOP TENS

Some of our contributors' top ten things we've reviewed this month. For review consideration, send two copies of vinyl, or one copy of CD-only or demo releases to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. We review independent punk, garage, and hardcore releases—no major labels!

GRACE AMBROSE

PARSNIP – 45
HAND GRENADES – 12"
CHANDRA – Transportation 2xLP
EKE BUBA – Shut Up EP
GELD – Soft Power EP
CT–85 – CS
IDIOTA CIVILIZZATO – LP
CLOSET CHRIST – Y EP
CIA – LP / ROHT – LP
SALIVA TRIBE – Brown Napalm CS

PETER AVERY

PARSNIP – 45
HAND GRENADES – 12"
BITEMARKS – Sucia LP
BOOJI BOYS – Unknown Pleathers EP
EXTERNS – live
GLEN SCHENAU – EP
LISA MARR / THE TRANZMITORS – EP
RICHARD PAPIERCUTS – 12"
CHANDRA – Transportation 2xLP
HOLLY GOLIGHTLY – CD

MATT BADENHOP

ETERAZ – live
CLOSET CHRIST – Y EP
HAND GRENADES – 12"
ARROTZAK – Lurzoru Hotzetik LP
GINO AND THE GOONS – EP
CT–85 – CS
IDIOTA CIVILIZZATO – LP
EKE BUBA – Shut Up EP
NO STATIK – LP
RED DELICIOUS – Far From The Tree EP

HEATHER BLOTTO

ANNÉES ZÉRO – Nique EP
ARROTZAK – Lurzoru Hotzetik LP
COLUMNA – LP
DES DEMONAS – Bay of Pigs EP
NO STATIK – LP
QLOWSKI – Pure as Fear EP
RED DELICIOUS – Far From the Tree EP
RICHARD PAPIERCUTS – 12"
TØRSÖ – Build and Break EP
WLMRT – Lube 2 EP

MITCH CARDWELL

HUNCHES – Same New Thing LP
RICHARD PAPIERCUTS – 12"
PARSNIP – 45
THE SUBURBAN HOMES – EP
RYAN DINO – LP
S.B.F. – Same Beat Forever LP
BAD BAD – Another Insect Bite EP
BABY'S BLOOD – EP
TH' LOSIN STREAKS – LP
HAND GRENADES – 12"

ROBERT COLLINS

ETERAZ – live
ROHT – LP
TOTRAFFEN – ISM LP
EKE BUBA – Shut Up EP
C.H.E.W. – Feeding Time LP
ANINOKO – live
Q – Quiche EP
FANCY – Pick Up EP
IDIOTA CIVILIZZATO – LP
WAR OF DESTRUCTION – Angst LP

JOAN DETORO

IDIOTA CIVILIZZATO – LP
Q – Quiche EP
ETERAZ – live
EKE BUBA – Shut Up EP
GELD – Soft Power EP
KHIIS – live / KRIMEWATCH – live
ZED ZILCH – CS / EX-KIDS – CS
SALIVA TRIBE – Brown Napalm CS
CHANDRA – Transportation 2xLP
C.H.E.W. – Feeding Frenzy LP

MIRANDA FISHER

RICHARD PAPIERCUTS – 12"
HUNCHES – Same New Thing LP
HAND GRENADES – 12"
PARSNIP – 45
Q – Quiche EP
PARSNIP – 45
BAD BAD – Another Insect Bite EP
RYAN DINO – LP
CHANDRA – Transportation 2xLP
SALIVA TRIBE – Brown Napalm CS

LAYLA GIBBON

PARSNIP – 45
HAND GRENADES – 12"
CHANDRA – Transportation 2xLP
HOLLY GOLIGHTLY – CD
RICHARD PAPIERCUTS – 12"
IDIOTA CIVILIZZATO – LP
RED DELICIOUS – Far From the Tree EP
CIA – LP
RYAN DINO – LP
Q – Quiche EP

GREG HARVESTER

ROHT – LP
THE SUBURBAN HOMES – EP
EKE BUBA – Shut Up EP
Q – Quiche EP
NO STATIK – LP
ARROTZAK – Lurzoru Hotzetik LP
GINO AND THE GOONS – EP
IDIOTA CIVILIZZATO – LP
PARSNIP – "Feeling Small / Winter"
HAKAN – III LP

KENNY KAOS

KING FLAMINGO – Space Race EP
LISA MARR / THE TRANZMITORS – EP
MANDATES – Dead In The Face LP
BEN EDGE / ELECTRIC PENCILS – LP
BRAIN EATERS – 10"
GINO AND THE GOONS – EP
SWINGIN' UTTERS/NOTHINGTON – EP
TH' LOSING STREAKS – LP
HAND GRENADES – 12"
NATURAL MAN & THE FLAMIN' HOT BAND – EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

CELEBRITY HANDSHAKE – EP
PARSNIP – 45 / YOUNG SKULLS – 45
GINO AND THE GOONS – EP
NEO NEOS – LP / DES DEMONAS – EP
THE SUBURBAN HOMES – EP
NATURAL MAN & THE FLAMIN' HOT BAND – EP
TH' LOSIN STREAKS – LP
CHANDRA – Transportation 2xLP
HAND GRENADES – 12"
NEGRO TERROR – film

RAY LUJAN

DEODORANT – Smells Good LP
DIRECT HIT! – Crown Of Nothing CD
GINO AND THE GOONS – EP
HAKAN – III LP
LEGIONAIRES DISEASE – CD
LOUIS LINGG AND THE BOMBS – CD
THE NEXT – Mad House CD
SICK OF IT ALL – Sleeping Dragon CD
YOUNG SKULLS – 45
REDD KROSS – live

SHITWORKERS

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Heather Blotto
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Joan DeToro
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Thera Webb
Shivaun Watchorn

INTERNATIONAL DISTROS

Below is a list of some of the many non-US distributors that currently carry *MRR*. We do our best to cover as much territory outside of the US that we can, but we still want to distribute to more parts of the world.

MRR has access to some of the lowest international postal rates offered by the USPS. If you have a distro, want to sell *MRR* at shows, or just want to get cheaper copies for friends by buying wholesale, email distro@maximumrocknroll.com for more details.

European distributors should get in touch with Specialist Subject for wholesale and subscriptions in in Europe: specialistsubjectrecords.co.uk.

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Wangedrag.be
facebook.com/wangedrag

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HUNGARY

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Radiation Records
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00184 Roma
and
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marco@radiationrecords.net
radiationrecords.net

NETHERLANDS

Don't Buy Records
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byllepestdistro@gmail.com

PORTUGAL

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Burgers and Records
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41724 Göteborg

SWITZERLAND

Rinderherz Records
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CH-2501 Biel/Bienne
rinderherz@gmx.net
rinderherzrecords.ch.vu

UNITED KINGDOM

Specialist Subject
Wholesale, subscriptions, single issues available
First Floor EXCHANGE
72 - 73 Old Market
Bristol, BS2 0EJ
info@specialistsubject records.co.uk

Different Kitchen
differentkitchen.bigcartel.com

Malicious Telecommunications
Subscriptions available
3A Daneville Rd
Camberwell
London SE5 8SE
malicioustele.com

ARGENTINA

X El Cambio Records
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BRAZIL

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Perra Vida, photo by Charlotte Beja

ISSUE #430

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We will not accept ads from major labels or bands with exclusive distribution through major-owned distros. Information about advertising can be found at maximumrocknroll.com.

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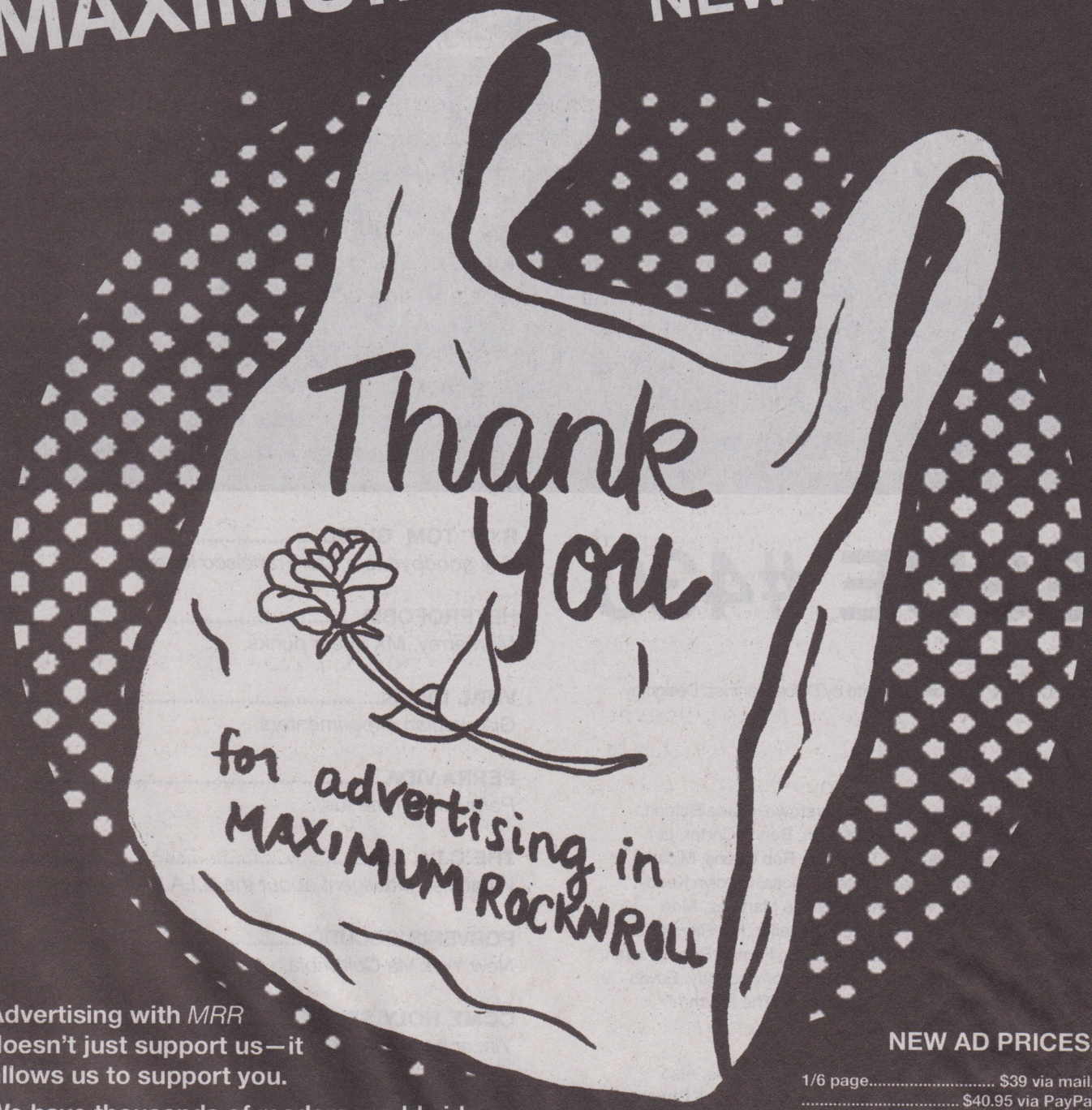

Advertising with *MRR* doesn't just support us—it allows us to support you.

We have thousands of readers worldwide who rely on us to keep them in the know. There's no better way to let the punk world know what you're about than an ad in *Maximum Rocknroll*!

Email ads@maximumrocknroll.com for questions about sizes, formatting, and more.

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1/3 page (long)	$75 via mail/ $78.75 via Paypal
1/3 page (square)	$75 via mail/ $78.75 via PayPal
1/2 page	$135 via mail/ $141.75 via Paypal
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Check our website or inquire for ad deals!

LONG LIVE MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

It is with heavy hearts that we are announcing the end of *Maximum Rocknroll* as a monthly print fanzine. There will be two more issues of the fanzine in its current format — *MRR* #432 will be our final print issue. But MRR will continue on as a weekly radio show, vinyl archive, and online resource for record reviews and more. Readers can look forward to more online content, updates regarding the archive project initiated in 2016, and other yet-to-be-announced MRR projects, as well as new ways for punks around the world to get involved. We will have more details and information in our upcoming final issues.

Maximum Rocknroll began as a radio show in 1977. For the founders of Maximum Rocknroll, the driving impulse behind the radio show was simple: an unabashed, uncompromising love of punk rock. In 1982, buoyed by burgeoning DIY punk and hardcore scenes all over the world, the founders of the show — Tim Yohannan & the gang — launched *Maximum Rocknroll* as a print fanzine. That first issue drew a line in the sand between the so-called punks who mimicked society's worst attributes — the "apolitical, anti-historical, and anti-intellectual," the ignorant, racist, and violent — and MRR's principled dedication to promoting a true alternative to the doldrums of the mainstream. That dedication included anti-corporate ideals, avowedly leftist politics, and relentless enthusiasm for DIY punk and hardcore bands and scenes from every inhabited continent of the globe. Over the next several decades, what started as a do-it-yourself labor of love among a handful of friends and fellow travelers has extended to include literally thousands of volunteers and hundreds of thousands of readers. Today, forty-two years after that first radio show, there have been well over 1600 episodes of MRR radio and 400 issues of *Maximum Rocknroll* fanzine — not to mention some show spaces, record stores, and distros started along the way — all capturing the mood and sound of international DIY punk rock: wild, ebullient, irreverent, and oppositional.

Needless to say, the landscape of the punk underground has shifted over the years, as has the world of print media. Many of the names and faces behind *Maximum Rocknroll* have changed too. Yet with every such shift, *MRR* has continued to remind readers that punk rock isn't any one person, one band, or even one fanzine. It is an idea, an ethos, a fuck you to the status quo, a belief that a different kind of world and a different kind of sound is ours for the making.

These changes do not mean that Maximum Rocknroll is coming to an end. We are still the place to turn if you care about Swedish girl bands or Brazilian thrash or Italian anarchist publications or Filipino teenagers making anti-state pogo punk, if you are interested in media made by punks for punks, if you still believe in the power and potential of autonomously produced and underground culture. We certainly still do, and look forward to the surprises, challenges, and joys that this next chapter will bring. Long live Maximum Rocknroll.

—MRR Crew

LETTERS

Send letters to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. Letters may be edited for length. Response not guaranteed.

MRR,

I'm writing my first letter ever to you in support of the board of director's decision to cease publishing *Maximum Rocknroll* as a print magazine. Despite my total admiration for the magazine, its ideals, and its work documenting the international punk scene for nearly four decades, I was initially elated, and not saddened, to hear the news of the magazine's folding. I'll admit that I feel some sadness now (I'm writing this after crying about the decision), but I feel elated because it allows *MRR* to address its problems within its framework. On a personal basis, I feel relieved because it means an end to the wildly unsustainable cycle the board has caught itself in with the coordinators, including me. I want to briefly talk about my experiences as coordinator here not only so it can be documented somewhere, but so readers can reckon with the state of the magazine as it completes its run.

I moved to San Francisco on August 1, 2017, to begin my turn as content coordinator at *Maximum Rocknroll*. I had never been there before and knew nobody beyond the people I had talked to the most during my application process. Hell, I had never been anywhere west of Oklahoma! I was wildly excited about *everything*! Working on the project, meeting the shitworkers, and getting a chance to thumb through the record collection...it felt like a dream come true. But it was a dream that didn't turn out anything like I anticipated. Instead, I later felt like I had been asked to keep a sinking, flaming ship on course with little help.

I came into the magazine with preconceptions about its operations based on not just my interpretation of it, but also interviews with shitworkers and even Tim Yo himself. I pictured the shitworkers sitting around the house, collaborating and discussing the content of each issue. I was excited to step into a community project. I wasn't totally wrong with the way I imagined things would be, but I was also not entirely right. As should be apparent to every reader, *Maximum Rocknroll* would not survive without its shitworkers and contributors throughout the world. *MRR* at its best seems like an omniscient force because of the knowledge and experiences that these people shared and continue to share with *MRR*. And *MRR* wouldn't make it into any punk's hands without the hard work of people like Mark Dober, who I would like to sincerely nominate for shitworker of the decade for consistently showing up multiple times each week solely to pack up the mail order. People like Mark are the reason why *MRR* continues to exist to this day.

But on another level, my preconceptions were totally wrong. During the duration of my training, I quickly recognized the general fatigue of so many of the shitworkers, especially those on the board of directors. There had recently been a crisis (one of many that *MRR* has weathered in what seems like a Herculean feat of strength) that required many longtime shitworkers to increase how much they chipped in so that the magazine could continue. There was a span of time with no distribution coordinator, and these shitworkers stepped up so that Grace Ambrose, who at the time was the only coordinator, would not have to take on those responsibilities as well. I later looked up to Grace with complete awe with all her accomplishments during her time as sole coordinator, but it was also easy for me to sense the stress and fatigue she had, and how it began to slip away when I moved in, knowing that the workload would soon be shifted off of her shoulders onto mine. Some of these board members would put in a couple of eight hour days (or more!) each month just to make sure the magazine would arrive in other people's hands. I was awed by the passion and devotion so many gave to the project, especially shitworkers like Grace and the handful of others that put in the work to fill the shoes of the distribution coordinators, but I was surprised that others were not available to contribute.

I quickly realized that gentrification was a huge factor in the decline of the number of local shitworkers. *MRR*'s compound is in a part of San Francisco that had originally been a largely Black neighborhood. Now almost nothing remains to indicate its history. Instead you can find boutiques selling camping gear, rustic leather belts for men, and other bullshit that made me snarl every time I walked by these storefronts. The great majority of San Francisco suffers a similar fate, with so many of its inhabitants being forced out since the tech boom, replacing unique neighborhoods where families lived for generations with some goddamn bullshit boutique stores and yuppies. Instead of the weirdos San Francisco was known for, there are Salesforce employees and other various squares, oblivious to the huge variety of lives they have forced out. Like anyone else not protected by rent control, most punks were forced out of the city at the same time as everyone else. As a result, the amount of shitworkers willing to come to *MRR* from Oakland or Berkeley or any number of places dwindled.

During my time living in the compound, I frequently described my living situation as being in a bubble of sorts, separate from not just punks, but working class people overall. I was isolated from most people I had anything in common with, including other trans women, and very few people, outside of a small group of dedicated shitworkers, ever came by the compound. I remember many times that, if I missed Mark or maybe a record reviewer, I would almost never see other punks or shitworkers in the house, often for days (and occasionally over a week) at a time. This changed when Miranda and later Vicky were hired, but even after their arrival it still was wildly different than my preconceptions.

The lack of shitworkers and what felt like disinterest from the board directly affected my ability to be content coordinator. Many people may not know that the content coordinator position, which I held, is one with a *ton* of responsibilities. For starters, not only is the content coordinator responsible for all of the content of the magazine

(including but not limited to soliciting and editing texts and images *plus* the layout for any columns, record reviews, interviews, and advertisements in every issue), they are also in charge of the finances, paying bills, reporting to the board of directors, answering emails and phone calls, upkeep of the record database, soliciting new ads, and assigning records to reviewers, among other tasks. On top of all of that, the content coordinator is the general face of the magazine to the public, and it is their job to best represent the magazine in order to increase sales. Even split up among two people, the content coordinator position requires a *lot* of work. I can't imagine what it was like before Grace created positions to divvy up responsibilities during her time as coordinator, but even after these positions were created I felt pretty overwhelmed with many aspects of coordinator work. Given that I moved here without knowing people, it seemed impossible to recruit new local shitworkers to help complete some of these tasks, and many people who stepped up to do so quickly stopped or never completed the first task assigned to them. And often if I needed help, many people on the board didn't know how to help or were otherwise unavailable.

Part of the problem was a lack of board meetings or even an idea of what the board of directors was supposed to be doing. Even now there are no written guidelines for what decisions the board is responsible for making and what decisions the coordinators should make on their own, nor are there any procedures for how the board would make those decisions. There wasn't even a master list of who was even *on* the board of directors! This was something that Miranda, Vicky, and myself were beginning to work on clearing up around the time that I left. There were no regular board meetings during the time that I was coordinator. In the past there were monthly board meetings, but fewer and fewer people attended them over time because, according to one board member, things seemed to be going alright and their presence didn't seem necessary. How could the magazine operate on a collective basis (as it is frequently perceived to) if the main collective doesn't even meet? If they were there for guidance, what guidance could they give if they didn't know what was going on in the compound? There typically wasn't communication between the board and the coordinators unless we reached out, but neither I nor Miranda nor Vicky knew when we were supposed to touch base with them.

This lack of excitement on their part mirrored my lack of excitement when I first saw the amount of magazines we were shipping out. I had known that *MRR* didn't have that many readers during my time distributing the magazine prior to moving to San Francisco. I used to display them at the counter of the record store I worked at, and almost everybody who noticed it commented something along the lines of "Oh, I didn't know *MRR* was still around" or "What *is* that?" I always sold out of each issue due to people having no idea where else to get *MRR* in north Florida. I had no idea that this extended beyond just north Florida and throughout the rest of the world. When I showed up to the *MRR* compound, I was shocked to find that the print run for a new issue was a mere four thousand copies. No wonder we got so many emails from people all over who didn't know where they could buy copies in person! My heart sunk when I saw just how few copies of *MRR* were being printed. And it certainly felt worse during my time as coordinator, where the print run got cut nearly in half. I felt despondent, and even told myself that I was likely going to be the last coordinator. When I left, I knew Miranda would be. The dwindling readership made it hard to continue to face the workload the coordinators had, but my love of the magazine kept me going.

During my time as coordinator I spent a lot of my downtime fantasizing about what it must have been like to be coordinator (or even a regular shitworker) at *MRR* during a time when there were more shitworkers present. I grew envious when I heard of Martin Sorrondeguy dancing around the house singing Detention's "Dead Rock 'N Rollers" or of drunken parties held there. What was it like to be coordinator when *MRR* was more widely read by punks? What would it have been like to be at an *MRR* where there were more frequent shitworker and board meetings? I'll never know—during the time I was coordinator there was only one shitworker meeting, and most decisions were not made collectively in the way that many people may have in mind when thinking of *Maximum*. I do not wish to absolve myself of any of my faults or the bad decisions I have made during my time at *MRR* (especially given that some of my difficulty with the position is certainly related to those faults), but at the same time I wonder how much more different my year at *MRR* would have been if there had been more shitworkers present and if the board of directors more regularly supported me than it did.

I resigned from my position as coordinator because I could not take care of my mental health in such a situation. I came here knowing nobody. I had left my support network behind. I had no family support. I was adapting to hormonal replacement therapy. My body was going through second puberty. I had just started continuously dressing in a gender affirming way for the first time ever. I faced harassment fueled by transmisogyny on a nearly daily basis that sometimes made me dread leaving the house. With the work *MRR* required, plus working a second job, I found myself struggling to take care of my mental health (even with a therapist), which eventually lead to intense suicide ideation. The choice became obvious: I could not stay isolated in a city where there's few people like me just so I could work a job where it felt like only a few people were passionately invested in the work necessary for not just its survival but also its improvement. So I left to better my mental health, and through hard work I now feel sounder than I ever did as coordinator. As you can imagine, I do not regret my decision.

After I left, *Maximum Rocknroll* began its process of searching for another content coordinator to replace me. People I knew began approaching me for advice about whether or not they should apply, what the application process looked like, and if they should do it. I felt such guilt as I told people that they should apply, because I knew that they would be set up for failure if they applied, and that despite whatever organizational skills, excitement for *MRR*, or sheer social networking skills they may have, they could not save *MRR* in the face of not just the decline of the magazine industry, but also all of the problems gentrification brings. I was *lying* to my friends and to excited punks that I barely knew, just so the magazine could maybe stay afloat a little bit longer. I wonder if Grace felt similarly when I was asking her about the coordinator position. Whether she did or not, the board's decision makes clear that they did not want to put other people in a similar position as the one Miranda and Vicky were in.

I fear this letter perhaps makes it sound as though I had no support or that board members were completely absent, which isn't true. There were a number of shitworkers that helped out during my time at the magazine, but there were never meetings between all of us where we discussed content-related projects at the magazine, or even big picture ideas. (I would like to note that at the time of the magazine folding there were projects in the works lead by Vicky Cassis.) In lieu of this, I reached out to shitworkers individually for help. I would like to thank Megan March, E Conner, John No, and especially Ari Perezdiez for all the advice, support, call-ins, and institutional knowledge that they imparted—I would not have been able to coordinate the magazine without them. As for the board members who supported me—you know who you are—I am thankful for your time and effort.

I also fear that this letter may make it seem like I see nothing positive about my time as coordinator, which is absolutely not true. Before I moved here I was in awe of the punks who contributed to *MRR*, a feeling that has not changed after meeting many of the shitworkers. I've found them for the most part to be wise, knowledgeable, and ethically sound people—dynamic individuals all. I feel lucky to count some of them as good friends. And on a personal level, *Maximum Rocknroll* has

changed me for the better, making me more confident overall while also improving my strengths and causing me to confront my deepest faults. I'm sure many people who have coordinated the magazine would say the same thing about the positive influence their time at *MRR* had on them as people. And somehow, despite having some pretty negative feelings about my time as coordinator, I remain a devoted shitworker and reader.

I am excited to see the effort that the board of directors is now taking to complete the last three issues. This seems to be a shitworker dream team, and I absolutely cannot wait to get my fingers dirty reading the last three issues. This prospect has excited me to no end; after the plans for the last three issues were announced I couldn't sleep out of utter excitement for what features and interviews would be included. At the same time, I wonder what the issues at *MRR* that I coordinated would have looked like with more frequent contributions from the board members and other shitworkers.

I would like to encourage the board and other *Maximum Rocknroll* shitworkers to not burn up all of the energy they have towards the *Maximum* project solely on these last three issues. After all, the print magazine may be concluding, but *Maximum* needs to exist still to document the DIY punk underground in all of its thriving forms throughout the world. I look at this decision as one brimming with potential—not just to better serve the broader punk world, but also to create a more sustainable *MRR*, one where we can potentially avoid burning each other out. And if *MRR* decides to shift some or all of its content online, as the statement by the board seems to suggest, then it will be able to reach potentially thousands of times the amount of people it reached in magazine form. Whether or not this is the case, I'm looking forward to collaborating with you towards creating a more sustainable *Maximum*.

With love,
Joan DeToro

Hello,

We most likely haven't met, but I was a shitworker at *MRR* from 1996–2001. I started as a 12 year old living in San Jose who took the Caltrain up to the *MRR* house and diligently turned in my reviews about a scene that totally captured my attention and consumed my imagination. It was Tim Yo, in a move of radical generosity and openness, who brought me on, as well as Bruce Roehrs, Tom Hopkins, and many others who treated my curiosity and interest with respect and encouragement. I can't begin to express how much *MRR* meant to me during those years of my life, which in hindsight were some of my most formative. I'm deeply sad hearing about the upcoming end to *MRR* in its printed form, but realize that in many respects it has been a long time coming, and want to express my appreciation to you and everyone who has worked hard to keep it alive through the years. I look forward to continuing to follow *MRR* in whichever incarnation it continues.

Best wishes,
Raphael di Donato

Dear *Maximum*,

Reading you has been a continual source of happiness for twenty years. Thank you for all your hard work! Looking forward to more irreverent reviews online.

Ari

All,

How do you encapsulate the importance of an entity that was the single biggest influence on your life? An entity that shaped who you are today and one that will stay with you until you're gone? Yes, *MRR* will continue in various e-guises, but that crazy newsprint zine, a grubby Oliver Twist waif lurking on the newsstands amongst the glossies, provided the visceral, physical connection. The tinnitus from blasting the tunes took a while to manifest itself, but the ink stains on the fingers were immediate. I have a tendency to gush about things and people that matter intensely to me, so I hope this doesn't come across as too maudlin or nausea-provoking. And I don't want this to be a eulogy either, simply a sincere note of recognition and gargantuan respect for what everyone at *MRR* has accomplished over the last 36 (thirty-fucking-six!) years. Along with the words I wrote for the intro to *MRR* archive issue 4, perhaps this excerpt from what I had written for "My First Time" (that wasn't selected for print) will suffice:

> *From that point on I knew that I had to do more than just watch. This was an opportunity to do something, anything, to get out there and let myself be heard. This was something real, something that didn't fold under the pressure of conformity. This was about fighting back. This was giving a name and a soundtrack to dissatisfaction, anger, confusion, and pure, raw, unfiltered emotions. I stopped caring about wanting to fit in with "everyone else", I didn't have to be like the rest of the world—I could be me, no more worrying, no more self-consciousness, no more bullshit. This wall of sound and pressure, with loud distorted music and incomprehensibly screamed words, had made my life clear. I had found the key to the lock on the ominous back room in my mind that held either great promise or overwhelming despair. I had found the exact solution / outlet I needed for a problem I had never been able to put my finger on. I was free.*

(I was talking about punk in general here, but *MRR* became the lens through which I saw punk.)

I would like very much to be able to attend on the 20th, but I am away from SF for the next few months. I think that the probable abundance of grey hair in the room on that day will speak volumes about the impact and importance of *MRR*. People didn't grow out of it, they stuck around (or at least kept an interest), well past the "sell-by" date of most things from our youth. I will be back in early April and can help with whatever is needed then.

With solidarity and veneration,
Brian Edge

Hey MRR crew.

Just a quick message to say thank you for all the years of bringing us punk in print form! Very sorry to hear the news, but looking forward to seeing what you guys do with the changes.

Up the punx//big up from Dublin,
Eric

Dear *MRR*,

As a twenty-something in New Orleans, I wasn't really in the right place at the right time to see *MRR* grow and flourish into what it

inevitably became. I could only abstractly picture the punk scene of the '80s and the cultural significance *MRR* had then and well into the '90s and 2000s. I did, however, catch *MRR* at the tail end of its reign as a form of printed media and was immensely overwhelmed by the doors that it opened for me in that short span of time. It introduced me to artists that I definitely would have never heard of (the amount of times I've since said "Trust me, you *gotta* check out Richard Papiercuts" is startling), it introduced me to my own scene here in New Orleans, and, most importantly, it introduced me to some of the most kind-hearted people I've ever met. If I wanted further information or context on something I read in an issue, I could just hit up the email knowing full well that I'd get a reply. It was great knowing I could come here with pretty much anything and feel like I was talking to someone I've known my whole life. I talked to people representing content coordination, book reviews, demo reviews, etc. and I haven't had a single negative experience with any of them.

After months of salivating over each new issue I decided to try desperately to do *something* for the zine. I didn't think there was much chance for me, being an out-of-towner and all. Because, really, why would anyone take a chance on me if I can't physically show up to the compound and be presently engaged in person? So you can imagine my surprise when I received postage sent to my pseudonym ("Feck Speiderbeck") and, upon opening, discovered about ten or so demos on cassette and CD-R, with a note attached wishing me the best of luck in reviewing them. To someone that never really felt included in most fields of interest, this was like Christmas morning. I listened to every demo about ten times, even the ones that were really bad. I was just super excited to have been a part of this.

Then, only a month or so later, I hear that *MRR* is going out of print indefinitely, and while I recognize and accept that this isn't the end for *MRR* as a whole, it is still a huge blow to the community. I can look at this one of two ways: one, my inclusion in the zine, through some cosmic demon-curse, somehow brought about the end of *MRR* and maybe soon life as we know it; or two, I was actually in the right place at the right time for once. While I wish *MRR* would be in print for eternity, and my great-great-grandkids can talk about Gunk and the Fucko Twins or some other made-up-sounding, three-chord-playing, distortion-pedal-addicted hardcore group for years to come, I also have to keep in mind that if I had put off participating just a little longer—as little as a few months—I would have never been able to be a part of it. So, in that way, there is something kind of beautiful to all of this. I feel like I'm going down with a ship I boarded yesterday, but it was a ship I wanted to be on for a long time—a ship I never thought I'd get to cruise on. It's like if you wanted to play for the Lakers your entire life, then one day you finally make it on the team and the president outlaws basketball. It's sad that you didn't get more time with it, but for a short period you felt like you were actually a part of something. It's not exactly like that, because this isn't the Lakers, I never watch basketball, and the president can't outlaw punk (I'd like to see him try), but it's similar in a way, kind of.

Anyway, maybe a letter from someone who hardly got to take part in the fun isn't worth much, but *MRR* is a big deal to me, so I just wanted to show my incredible appreciation for this zine, the sense of inclusion I got from it, and the people involved. I also hope this is a good mind-relaxer in a sea of what I assume is hate mail. I hope you guys aren't getting yelled at too much. I can't pretend to know the goings-on behind the scenes, but I know you wouldn't be doing this if there was any other feasible option. So for that alone, I wish you all the best and thank you for doing what you did for so long. This letter is really lame but I hope you guys appreciate it.

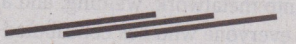
Long live *MRR*.
Eric

Hey *MRR*, sad to hear the news about the zine. I first encountered *MRR* with #0 when I purchased *Not So Quiet on the Western Front* in the dim and distant past. To this day *MRR* is still the hard copy go-to source for all things punk. Here's hoping whatever format you continue on with that doesn't change. Stay punk!

The Fempire Fatale Strikes Back Zine

I am very disappointed and angered to see that you have chosen to remove the print aspect of MRR. I spent many years in a country that has limited internet access, and the print magazines (though slow and a few months late) were my connection to my hometown and scene. Young people thrive on ease of access, and popping into a record store and browsing or buying the newest issue is a tradition that my son will now never know. Disappointing. I just hope somebody actually cares about young punks and their experiences. Hopefully someone in charge reconsiders.

Julaya Antolin



Dear folks at the *MRR* HQ,

Thank you for EVERYTHING you've done throughout the past decades to come up with a new print issue of *MRR* each month, as well as for all your other activities (radio shows, putting out records, photo exhibitions, etc.). *MRR* meant, punk-wise, everything to me. It was our social media during the '80s and '90s, long before the internet started. Reading *MRR* meant that you could get in touch with other people and bands worldwide, exchange ideas, and start doing projects together. I was living in Germany close to the German / Dutch border. Loads of bands from all over Europe, the UK, and the US came over on tour, and we mostly made contacts via *MRR*. I don't know how many people from all the world came for a visit to my house and spent some time on our couch. I've been to almost every country of Western Europe, the US, Canada, and Australia, and I always stayed with punks, who showed me around to places tourists usually wouldn't get to see. The bonds with my dear friends in Brisbane, Australia, got so tight that my German girlfriend and I got married there in 1996. Since that time loads of Aussies have come for a visit, not just people out of the punk scene, but also their friends, relatives and even parents. I met some cool punks in New Zealand, Brazil, and even on Borneo. *MRR* has been the vehicle that connected me.

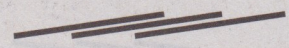
I have been reading *MRR* from the very start, had my first piece printed in *MRR* #8, and did quite a few scene reports, articles, and interviews. I stayed for some time at the *MRR* headquarters in early 1987 to help put together the *Welcome to Cruise Country* photozine, for which I collected the photos from numerous photographers in Europe. This photozine got printed in cooperation with *Trust*, Germany´s longest-running punk fanzine. Meeting Tim and the gang at the *MRR* house and the radio station was awesome and helped me to stay active over all those years. Some of you folks might have bought some of my European hardcore and punk records at Epicenter, as I was selling a large portion of my record collection to Tim Yohannan when I moved to Chicago in the late '80s. *MRR* has been the most importation punk rock publication for our generation, and I'm so thankful that so many more people kept *MRR* going after Tim Yohannan died.

Now the printed part of MRR is coming to an end. I'm not sad, because I knew that the people who have been involved will keep up

with it, just on a different level.

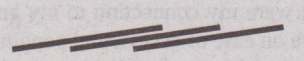
Dear *MRR*, I owe you my life, and I'm saying that from the bottom of my slimy little punk rock heart.

Helge Schreiber
OX Fanzine



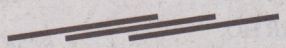
It can't be end of the magazine. You are my biggest music inspiration for more than 14 years. Thank you.

Lukas from Czech Republic.



As a '90s punk, seeing your zine as a kid in a Barnes and Noble helped broaden my horizons beyond Green Day / NOFX / Rancid / the Offspring, helped me get involved in my local scene, and was part of the inspiration for me to put together a zine and interview bands. The DIY ethos led me into metalwork, welding, and art and gave me a life path. Big thanks to everyone who has contributed over the years.

Ted from Reno



Dear MRR,

I'll miss the newsprint. I understand the practical concerns and am not necessarily in disagreement. I'll miss the ability to take the mag to the park or the coffee shop. I've met friends by reading MRR in public. One late '80s Midwestern pen pal would put out the newest MRR on the counter at her cafe, and when customers would read it, she'd give them free coffee.

So, dear readers, what will you do for your newsprint fix? Well, there's still the best newspaper in America, the mighty *Anderson Valley Advertiser*. They have different mottos on the mast: "A Newspaper Should Have No Friends," "Peace to the Cottages, War on the Palaces," "America's Last Newspaper," and "Fanning the Flames of Discontent." Bruce Anderson writes about baseball in a way Tim would have loved. They have the best crime reporter covering the Mendocino courts, and their letter to the editor section is divine! No demo reviews, though. Their music coverage is usually classical reviews written by a guy in Ithaca, New York. Aaron recommends the *West Village News*, mixing news of gentrification and the loss of hospitals in the West Village of Manhattan with senior center activities and bird watching. *News from Indian Country* is published out of Northern Wisconsin. I occasionally find copies at work, my luck! Lots of small town topics, but from all over the country, like who's the rodeo princess or profiles on indigenous chefs. The scope of information is deep, lots of intrigue with the tribal governments, direct opposition to colonizer governments, and wide coverage of environmental issues. *Tape Op*, while not newsprint, is still printed. It's great for including total nerd details into topics I don't care about, but those details open my heart. Then I can't stop reading.

Portland's best newspaper, the Mid County Memo, also stopped publishing in 2019. They're on the web, too, just like *MRR*. I'll be reading, squinting at my phone like other nobs on the bus. At least until I pull out the latest issue of the AVA. RIP Newsprint *MRR*.

Erin Yanke, Portland, Oregon

P.S. Thanks Jacqueline for recruiting me to write demo reviews way back when. Thanks all other shitworkers—past, present, future—for everything.

We've received an overwhelming number of questions and offers of support in the past few weeks. In our upcoming final print issues we will be doing our best to offer more clarity about the reasoning behind this decision. Please feel free to be in touch with mrr@maximumrocknroll.com with questions and concerns. If you want to stay updated on what the future of MRR will look like, please drop a line asking to be added to our mailing list.

As we wind down the print magazine, move out of the house, and gear up to build our increased web presence we will need more shitworkers and enthusiastic punks in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond to help us build our new vision of the future.

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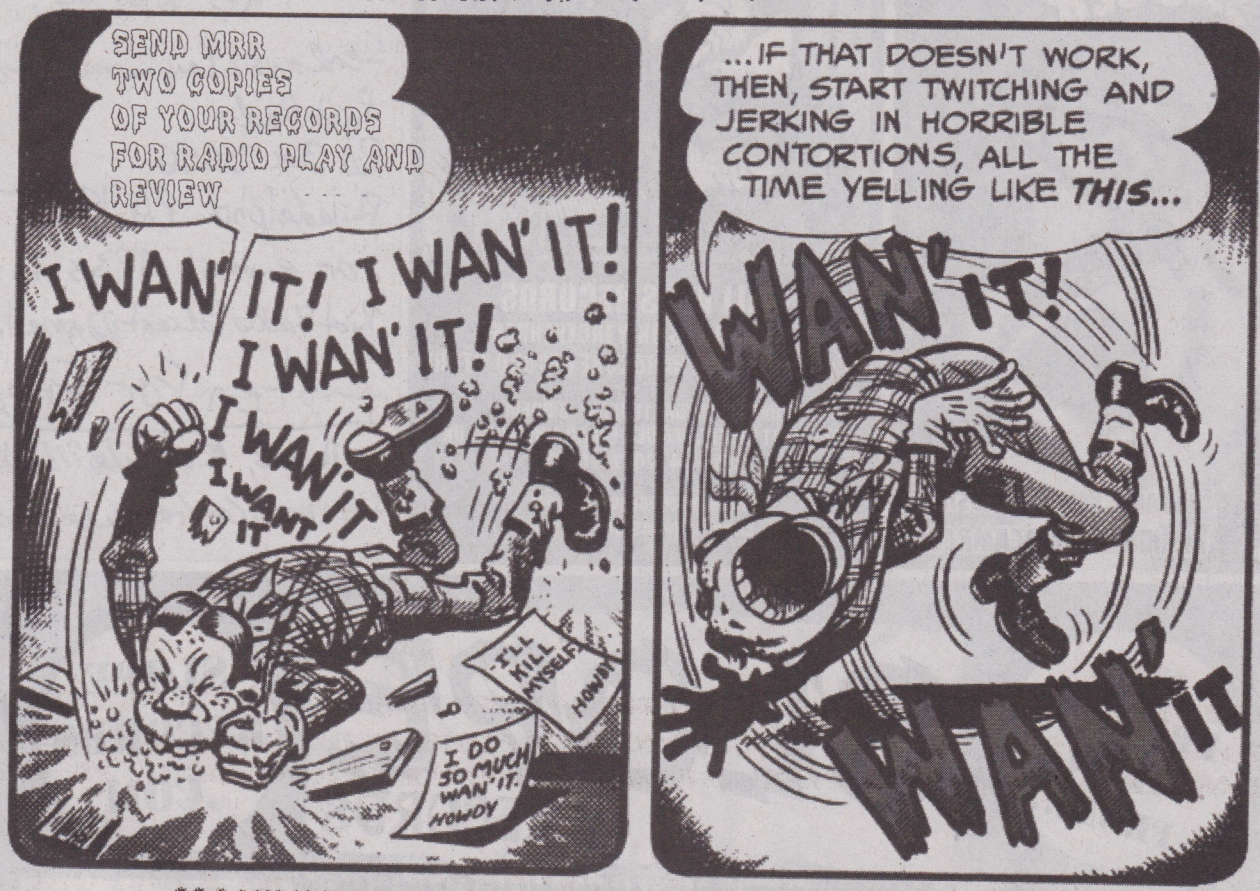

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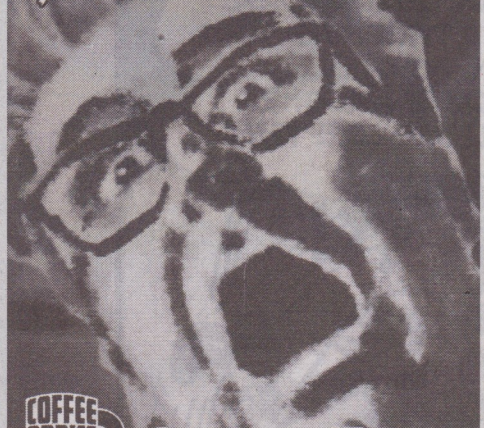

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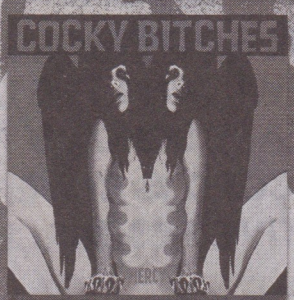
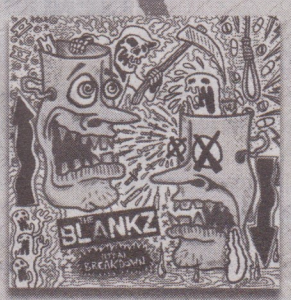




COLUMNS

WE ARE THE PUNKS WE HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR

MIMI THI NGUYEN

As a refugee and a preteen weirdo in lily-white Minnesota, where our sponsors lived, I grew up fascinated with punk; the sneering bravado of television punks as villains of the week, coupled with glimpses of its watered-down aesthetic in music videos, made me wistful for a way of being in the world—defiant, tough, and subterranean—I fervently believed corresponded with how I felt, but that I would never know. Later, as a black-clad alternateen bopping to radio-friendly post-punk staples from the Cure, Siouxsie Sioux, Echo and the Bunnymen, Suicidal Tendencies, and INXS, I still could not quite imagine another world was possible. So it was my first issues of *Maximum Rocknroll*, picked up in an alternative boutique in downtown San Diego that left unsold back issues next to the alt-weeklies, which introduced me to a new reality. *Punks were real, and here was the door.* And from those earliest issues, I learned that punk was full of people who cared fiercely about state violence, including the semi-covert wars of the Cold War United States in Central America; about nefarious corporate campaigns pursuing uranium strip-mining in New Mexico on indigenous reservations; and about a more radical feminism than found on my local library shelves. *Maximum* was my *Tiger Beat*, the punks rioting after the Rodney King verdicts, and the launch of the first Gulf War, the pinups of my wild-eyed daydreaming.

I moved to Berkeley to go to college, and to be with the punks. I attended women's studies courses and activist meetings, and on the weekends I worked at Epicenter, the all-volunteer, not-for-profit record store and community space—established with the aid of *Maximum Rocknroll*'s Tim Yohannan. Riding my bike through the City, listening to the Ex as I fell asleep on the couches, and hanging out in the zine library watching VHS tapes, with others, I thought punk had room for someone like me. But in an issue from the summer of 1994—I don't remember the specific number, though it was a particularly depressing example of computer-age graphic design—a regular columnist waxed at length about his unfulfilled Asian fetish, and resurrected a racist speculation that "slanted" eyes might correspond with also exotically novel, horizontal vulvas. I wrote in an angry letter of protest, outlining the racist, colonialist history of dehumanization that rendered our bodies alien and other. The arguments I made then about this sort of "humor," what music critic Lester Bangs disparagingly dubbed twenty years earlier as "racist cool," are perhaps more obvious now; the bullshit premise of anti-PC punk has became the Bitcoin of the incel-troll realm, the wannabe fascists masquerading as "alt-right" edgelords cum Supreme Court justices. I heard secondhand from shitworkers that the columnist wrote a second column, suggesting that because I was a humorless feminist, I was probably too ugly to fuck—despite being Asian. I was also told that Tim decided that this column counted as satire, and published it despite the "no racism, sexism, or homophobia" edict. I felt betrayed, alone, angry, obviously—but also something more like an eviction. I had made a home, and then I was without one. And so, because of *Maximum*, I put together the compilation zine *Evolution of a Race Riot* as a fuck-you and farewell gesture to the scene that I had loved and then felt I had lost. As I have said elsewhere, I wanted to establish an informal record of our presence and a critique of those practices of absenting us, through neglect or through violence. *Race Riot* and all that followed was very much born from the desire to see what *Maximum Rocknroll* had not been able to see—not just black and brown punks, but the political and aesthetic economy that renders black and brown punks unseeable, untraceable.

I don't know if Tim understood what his decision did to me, or that he ever read *Race Riot*. I stopped reading *Maximum*, and swore that I was done with punk, even after I moved back to the Bay. But Jacqueline, a former Epicenter Switchboard operator and one of the first coordinators after Tim's death, fired the columnist in question after he submitted yet another misogynist column (something about Cadillacs and vaginas). She and the two other coordinators, Arwen and Sean, approached the enterprise with intellectual curiosity, cool-headed pragmatism, and renewed commitment. It was in this spirit that Jacqueline reached out to me, and made it clear that racist cool and casual misogyny did not pass as satire at the magazine anymore.

So I became a shitworker at *Maximum Rocknroll*. While in graduate school, I graded undergraduate essays while green-taping records for the archive, and debated critical theory while preparing subscriptions on New Issue Day. I learned just how much labor goes into the magazine, from editing columnists and chasing advertisers, to rolling with changes in print distribution at the height, and at the beginning of the end, of national music chains like Tower Records. And for years, the compound was a second home; we made (or ordered) dinner while discussing fantasy novelists and sectarian political cults, playing Trivial Pursuit or a truncated Dungeons & Dragons adventure (I definitely asked if my race could be "Asian elf"). I was glad to be a shitworker when Ronald Reagan died; we had been planning for the occasion for *years*. A cardboard box labeled "Reagan" had sat gathering dust above the retired waxing machine in the office corner, and on the afternoon of Reagan's passing, a handful of volunteers hastily assembled to record a radio show of nothing but anti-Reagan songs, and discuss features and deadlines for the Reagan counter memorial issue. It felt momentous, triumphant, to be a part of the magazine in that moment; as one cover idea put it: "Punk: 1, Reagan: 0." In so many ways, being a shitworker during the long trek through dissertating—about U.S. wars and its lies about the so-called gift of freedom that first cohered for me reading those earliest issues of *Maximum*—gave me something concrete to do with my hands that felt impactful in the world.

Maximum continued to pull me back in, even after I left the Bay for a postdoctoral fellowship, and then a tenure-track position, in the Midwest. I had never been a punk in a small town before, so I felt more deeply the stories I had heard, and read, about being a lone freak wandering a two-block downtown. For all the times I had claimed to quit, it was the first time I found myself at such a distance from this scene about which I had so publicly declared deep ambivalence, while once again feeling as intensely about needing it, as I did when I was sixteen, to save my life. In a column published in 2009, Osa Atoe addressed the black and brown punks from a few years before her own time. She wrote of revisiting her collection to read again ten, fifteen year-old zines including *Race Riot*, *How to Stage a*

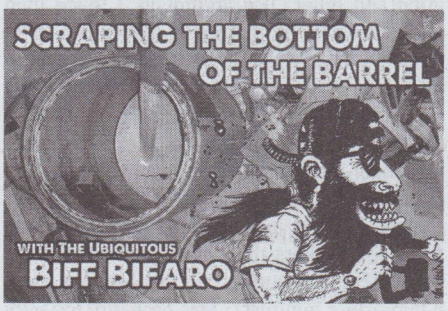
COLUMNS

Coup, Slander, Quantify, and *Mala*, and how these helped her and other black and brown punks who came later establish a history, and sign. "What all of these early POC punk zines did for me was put me in touch with other brown punk kids. I remember meeting this queer Asian girl, Celeste at a BBQ/b-day party because I saw a copy of *Race Riot* sticking out of her bag. Later, we started a Queer People of Color (QPOC) group together made up of about six brown queer kids." Osa also wondered what happened to us, to the black and brown punk women who created communion where there had been none. "What was the point of putting out zines like *Race Riot & How to Stage a Coup*, if not to try to spawn some kind of change in the punk scene? Well here we are! The change (I hope) they wished to see in the world!"

A few years later, Osa and I went on zine tour with a small crew of other punks of color. On that tour I lived again those parts of being punk that were so important to me, and that I had lost touch with during my time on the tenure clock in a college town, including those intense friendships built on moments of shared frustrations and familiar vulnerabilities, and also singing Taylor Dayne's "Tell It To My Heart" out loud and off-key in the rental van. What was so remarkable to me about the tour was the fact that it could happen at all. Here we were, convened to talk about race and racism, and all these things that constellate with them, in familiar refrains—about war and migration, childhood poverty, and multiple forms of violence—but newly inflected with a sense of possibility, movement, and community.

Over the years *Maximum Rocknroll* had come to reflect these changes too—in its coordinators, columnists, shitworkers, interviews and photographs. The scene politics that fueled *Race Riot* (straightwhitepunkboys engaging in unabashed misogyny, rape apology, and racist cool) or more recently Sari's *thou shalt not talk about the white boys' club: challenging the unwritten rules of punk* (a brilliant excoriation, with helpful questions for reader reflection about scene politics at the end of each section, which appeals to the teacher in me) or the anonymous *Destroy the Scene: Bros Fall Back*, still exist, of course. But *Maximum Rocknroll* has been and continues to be so much more than this, a conduit for misfits, freaks, and weirdos to generate new ideas, new actions, new forms of being in a shit world—whether it was making a zine, starting a band, or writing a book about empire.

What emerges for me from my own tumultuous history with *Maximum* is how the magazine—as an object that travels around the globe, as an idea that does the same, sometimes as a foil—describe a cluster of unpredictable encounters with others across times. *Maximum* has been an inalienable part of the sometimes invisible, and often thankless labor that make our scenes possible, whether publishing *Book Your Own Fucking Life* over twenty years ago, or describing the travails of securing DIY spaces in increasingly inaccessible cities with and against state surveillance and privatization in the name of "quality of life" now. (As Baja Blatz said, "Ask a cop, where the shows at?") As a meeting ground, a contact zone, a scene of transit, *Maximum Rocknroll* brought us together remotely (because we are scattered across the globe), and also intimately (because we wrote these words, and the ink stains all our fingers), such that we can stage conversations—or throw punches, whatever—about those things that are meaningful to us in the press of the moment, or throughout our histories, like this magazine is, has been, and will continue to be.



"...someone told me you people are crazy but I'm not so sure about that. You seem to be all right to me."

Long ago I embraced that punk was easily the most important thing in my life and that fact would inevitably make certain social aspects of life a bit more difficult. Living in a small city like Buffalo, NY, and being driven by weird and bizarre things, I noticed that the potential dating pool was depressingly small. Recognizing this, a number of years ago I made an attempt to expand the size of it, expose others to this wondrous world, and simultaneously break out of my own comfort zone which I think is always an important thing to try to do. Going to bigger shows and being open to making connections with people that weren't as deeply rooted in this world seemed to be a good place to make such a thing a reality.

While attending a SUBHUMANS gig and having a discussion with Robert Collins at the merch table, a punk girl in her early twenties approached us and we struck up a conversation. If memory serves right she was commenting on the lengths of both of our obnoxious beards. She and I got to chatting and we ended up exchanging contact information and making plans to get together in the near future. While I did meet this girl at a punk gig, it seemed to me from the get-go that she was mostly into and interested in very accessible punk. The RAMONES shirt she was wearing may have been a sign of this as well. To this day I have issues whenever I see people in a RAMONES t-shirt in that I always want to walk up to them and strike up a conversation. The RAMONES are my all-time favorite band, after all, and every year that goes by it seems that all of the lesser celebrated late-era RAMONES records get a little bit better while everything else in the world gets a little bit worse. Hell, when I travelled South America with a band, you wouldn't believe the amount of RAMONES shirts we saw. "Eu amo RAMONES" is one of the few things I truly remember in Portuguese due to the amount of times I wanted to discuss my favorite band with someone that I initially perceived to be a fan on a similar level. One of the cool things about South America was that absolutely everyone seemed to know who the RAMONES were, and want to talk about them, specifically their crummy later material which was shockingly popular down there. While getting coffee at a shop in Curitiba, Brazil, the owner asked where we were from and what we were doing down there. When we told him we were a punk band he merely replied "Aah, the RAMONES, 'I Believe in Miracles'!" It was definitely a highlight of the trip for me. This was truly where I seemed to belong, a land where not only did people want to talk about the Ramones, but they wanted to discuss their often overlooked work from albums like *Brain Drain*.

When it came time for the two of us to hang out, the girl from the show and I had a difficult time deciding what we should do, Buffalo being a not particularly cool city with little to do, so we ended up getting together to watch a movie. She came over to my house wearing a different RAMONES shirt and I made us root beer floats while she skimmed my movie shelves looking for something that piqued her interest. The hangout kind of turned into punk school, her asking me about bands and records and movies that she was vaguely aware of but had not yet been exposed to. I don't remember what record we listened to while making the movie decision but I know we ended up watching *Repo Man* and that she enjoyed it. This became a somewhat regular thing: we would hang out and listen to records while I whipped up refreshments and then we would watch other punk-centric movies that she was curious about. It was actually quite a fun and wholesome activity that I began looking forward to as the weeks went on. We watched *Class of 1984, Another State of Mind*, even delved into the punksploitation episode of *Quincy M.E.*, all of which were enjoyed thoroughly. My new friend seemed to really be opening up to this world that she had previously only scratched the surface of

and we started hanging out more often as she seemed eager to learn more.

Late one Sunday evening she arrived at my house. I let her in and she headed right for the movie shelf, our punk school routine in full effect. I returned to the kitchen to finish making our grilled cheeses to enjoy during whatever movie we ended up watching and she removed her coat revealing yet another Ramones shirt. When I had finished cooking, I entered the living room with arms full of food and she asked me about the CRAMPS video I had, stating that she had never heard the band and knew of them only by name alone. This was the Target Video "Live at Napa State Mental Hospital," which, for those of you unfamiliar with it, features video of the CRAMPS in 1978 performing in an insane asylum. The band pays solely for the residents. While describing what the video was, I could already tell that this might end badly. Her eyes became wide with worry as I excitedly described what the set contained. Despite her discomfort, her curiosity took over and she still agreed to watch the video.

"I got CRAMPS, what am I gonna do about it?"

"I dunno, that's your problem, honey, I got 'em myself and I can't do anything with 'em either"

Settling back onto my couch with my sandwich and having already seen the glory of this CRAMPS performance countless times, I tried subtly watching her as the set progressed to see what her reactions were. Many things within the course of this performance normally have me grinning idiotically and choking back excited squeals as the line between performer and crazy person blurs more and more. I can see how the concept of this may seem off-putting in the modern day, but watching this I can't help but love it. I think it's actually quite beautiful the way the band seems to treat this like a normal gig. Interacting with the crowd as equals, not being condescending or worried that things might go awry, and everyone seeming to be having such a blast running around, dancing, making out, stealing the microphone. "We're the CRAMPMS and we're from New York City and we drove 3,000 miles to play for you people," making everyone in attendance feel like their home was the singular destination on the trip the band was on. Beautiful. I hurriedly choked down my sandwich so I could focus more on what I was watching, I don't believe she moved a muscle the entire time. Her eyes remained large, unblinking, and affixed on the screen. She left shortly after the video had ended. We never really discussed what her thoughts were on the performance or on the CRAMPS in general, but it seemed pretty apparent how much she disliked it. After a week or so of infrequent contact she ended up disappearing entirely and this ended up being the last time we hung out together. Whether witnessing Lux in all his glory sent her to a mental hospital of her own, I cannot say, but it certainly seems to have turned her off to delving deeper into the world of weird punk. All I know is once she left I went back to my living room, cued the video up for another round, and ate the remaining 3/4 of her sandwich that she seemed unable to eat.

Youth Attack!

Of all wider cultural preconceptions of young punks, none are as pervasive as that of the disillusioned teenager who likes angsty music. While reductionist, even undeniably dismissive, the preconception stands- teenage punks who go a few DIY shows, slap an *insert Epitaph 90's skatepunk band* backpatch on their hoodie, all while annoying their parents by teaching themselves chords on their uncle's old Squire are very common. The unfairness of this preconception lies not necessarily in the archetype it is based upon, but rather the negative connotation and association many hold with that preconception. Let me get to my point: "babypunks" are not a bad thing for the scene, for social change, or for punk as a genre itself. Underground communities, however creatively and culturally solvent, inevitably thrive upon the inclusion of new participants, regardless of if those participants are young, inexperienced, or simply don't have as developed musical taste as some as in the case of punk. It's a shame that newcomers to many communities within our scene are frequently derided for transgressions that can be often chalked up to not "having enough punk points" by individuals who view them through a lens of distrust and elitism. Punk is not insular—any insulation punk experiences is a result of backlash from broader society—and anyone wishing to reach out into our world should be welcomed. It's a matter of recognizing, welcoming, and introducing young people to the scene who have a genuine interest in participation and creatively contributing to our communities.

Punk often also serves as a gateway to sociopolitical awareness and self discovery. There are an unfathomable amount of radicals in this community and the world-at-large who would not hold the ambitious and world changing ideas that they do had they not been introduced to incendiary and transgressive music as young people. As a result, punk and radical political activism tend to have a huge overlap of participation. One way we can effect anti-capitalist and anti-statist change to the world is through introducing newcomers in our scene to radical politics and encouraging them to become more aware of the world around them, thus more or less inducting them into the fight against capital and its influences. This is not to say that many older participants to the scene do not need a more thorough introduction to anarchism or other affiliated ideas, but rather that younger people who are disillusioned with the failures of neoliberal democracy and the creative constraints of popular music and culture are the future of the radical political underground, and the symbiotic relationship it shares with punk. Holistically, for the sake of our health as a global community and for the possibility of radical social change, it makes sense to welcome new blood and ensure that newcomers are not alienated, or worse bullied or hazed by a jaded older punk who has lost sight of themself. As important as it is for us to express our individuality and independence as peopl,e it should not remain beyond our scope of practice so to speak as to be role models and mentors to younger people new to our communities who are more often than not seeking solace from a harsher world that has rejected their differences.

Too often you meet an old punk who has abandoned the inclusive and collective social dynamics of the modern punk scene for their own very closely knit crew of malt-liquor leather jacket warriors, either resulting in or as a result of their assuming a "fuck you, I don't know you, and I don't like you" attitude that intentionally closes themselves off from being a participant within our community and cements themselves as a member of their own passive enclave. This archetype of punk comes to shows with an air of pure belligerence and distrust, and is usually really only there for the headliner. It is impossible to gauge their actual commitment to our communities and even more difficult to determine if they are acting within good faith. Perhaps the existence of this archetype is emblematic of a cultural shift within punk from the mall-nihilist shaved head hardcore wasteland of the late '70s and early '80s (and even the '90s) to the predominant inclusive DIY ethic of today. Many old punks (and some young closeted fascist posers) lament that the "PC police" wield more influence than they in the modern world of punk. In an ideal world, old-rusty-studs would be passing on their wisdom

and insight (if they have any) to younger participants as much as possible, instead of taking creepy pictures of young girls at the big TSOL show and knocking people's lights out in the pit. Sadly, this world seems farther and farther away from the one we live in, and gets worse every time someone judges another for not having enough studs on their jacket or for, God forbid, voicing legitimate issues that affect oppressed populations through music and art.

As important as inclusion is to our scene, the same lens of distrust and elitism can be useful when separating the grain from the chaff. We just need to fine-tune that lens to focus more upon traits of responsibility and (relative maturity.) I will reiterate: in order to perpetuate our subculture, we need to be able to pass on the management of our institutions and traditions to younger people who are willing and capable enough to assume those kinds of responsibilities. If a fifteen year old can discuss the discography of your favorite band with you while efficiently working their shift watching the side door of your DIY venue that they volunteered to work in the first place, they may be a great person to clue in to a house show or to work a more responsibility-heavy position. Such an experience could change their life for the better. That young punk that you chatted up for a few minutes cares just as much about the music as you do—if you can put yourself in their shoes, you would know that the music they listen to is their world, it's their solace and passion. Young punks who are devoted to the right things are all around us. We just have to seek them out.

When I was in my early adolescence a few years ago I think I resolved the archetypical pubescent identity crisis that all younger teenagers suffer via punk and my introduction to the subculture at large. I found identity in people who were older than me and cooler than me (at least within my view), and were able to teach me things whether or not they realized they were teaching me in the first place. Those older punks were kind and empathetic and displayed genuine caring for my annoying younger self. While I am still annoying, and almost certainly not cooler, the experiences I had and things I learned (how to take care of drunk people, patches of Nazi bands I should look out for, how to book a show, just to name some things we all learn) deeply affected my development into the young adult that I am now. I owe my continued (relative) happiness and guidance into adulthood to punk, the DIY ethic, radical politics and to kindness and inclusivity exhibited by people who extol the virtues of such concepts. I simply wish that the experience I had were more universal. I am, unfortunately, unimaginative and cannot speak as to how we could change the subculture we participate within and push it in a direction that is ultimately more inclusive to younger people who do nothing wrong other than exist as young people amongst older people. It is a topic, however, that I would like to open a dialogue upon. I encourage older people reading this to take notice of younger people at shows and in your community spaces and simply be a good role model (as much as a punk can be) and community member. Showcase compassion and understanding. While you may think you are not positively influencing that young person's life, you may very well be. You were their age once. They may even look up to you.

Thank you for reading.
Send me your hate at otto@924gilman.org

The Decentralization of Punk Rock
Part 2, I Guess

If I had a dollar every time I heard someone say that the internet is ruining punk rock, those people would call me a sellout. But really, what's more punk rock than the internet? A whole bunch of people started punk bands in order to subvert the music industry, and along comes this thing that *totally fucking crushes and dismantles* it in no time (or at least totally changes it) and people are just whining about it! I guess if there's one thing punks like more than crushing and dismantling, it's complaining about stuff.

I think the internet is pretty rad. Of course, some people might say that it doesn't matter what I think since all of us Gen Z kids are willing to let Russian spies turn us into living Alexas through our Snapchat. And it's not like I think there aren't tons of problems with the internet. I still think it's cool to have stuff out there that exists purely in a physical form, like this magazine. But the internet has done the incredibly awesome job of decentralizing the punk scene (which I began to talk about in the last issue). "What's so great about that? It sounds like you're just using a big word that you only know because you're dad is an economist," you ask. Well, you're right about the second bit. The answer to the first bit is that now kids like me who barely have any friends that obsess over music the way they do can book a show with one of their favorite musicians even though they live thousands of miles apart.

My favorite show my band has played as of this writing was with this guy called DAVEY DYNAMITE. He's not that famous, even within the punk scene, but I fell in love with his record *Holy Shit* last February. He's an incredible songwriter. I guarantee that if you listen to that album, you will feel better in just a 35 quick minutes of REPLACEMENTS-esque glory! Anyway, last spring, Davey announced via Instagram that he'd be doing his first ever East Coast tour. I was beyond psyched. A few weeks later, he said he could use some help with a few dates. Lo and behold, Philly worked perfectly for one of them. I'd never even thought about booking shows for other people before, and had only ever done one with my band with the help of my friend, but I'd be damned if I didn't get to see that tour and the best way to make sure he played my city was to book the show myself.

About 50 emails and Facebook messages later, my band CHERRI COLA was loading our gear into a sweltering warehouse in the industrial wilds of Philadelphia after my first day of school. Not only was this the first show I'd ever booked for someone else, but it was my first time opening for another musician that I admired and wasn't already a friend of mine, so I was kind of nervous. This, plus the unrelenting heat, is probably what caused me to try to sit down on empty air instead of my drum throne before we'd even finished setting up. My fist went right through the bottom head of my snare drum and I fell hard onto the concrete floor. So now I was nervous, hot, in some pain, and my snare sounded like something off of *St. Anger*. Our set didn't end up going horribly, but I didn't feel like I played that great, so I was kind of bummed since I really wanted to impress Davey. At least until Davey started playing. Man, he was so good. It was just him and an acoustic guitar, screaming with no mic or anything. It was the least acoustic acoustic show I've ever seen. In short, it was the kind of show that makes you realize why you love music. I really had had nothing to worry about since he was super friendly and even said he loved our band and the flyer I made for the show! Plus, he and his friend Sol were kayaking at each city they played. It doesn't get cooler than that.

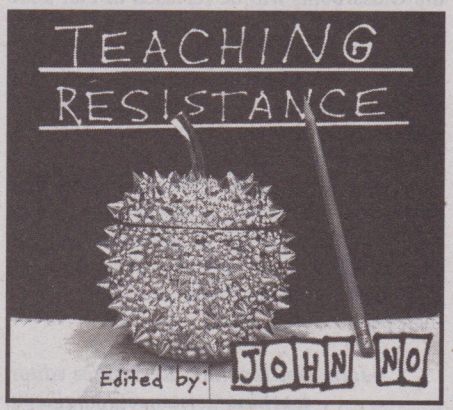
What I'm getting at is that I never would have heard of Davey Dynamite without the internet, much less been able to book a show with him without social media. I think a lot of the people bashing the internet's relationship to music either can't accept that things have changed since they were kids, or are romanticizing the good, old days when really they should be enjoying the fact that they can

listen to *so many bands* for free. And then maybe even book shows with those bands.

If you want to start harnessing the powers of the internet, talk to me at carmenservon@gmail.com. If you're eighteen or under, send me stuff you make and I'll review it! Nobody has sent me anything yet and it's making me a little sad. I'll even send you some pictures of my cute dog!

Over the last year I have spent a lot of time trying to declutter and organize all of this stuff that has piled up around me after years of involvement in the hardcore punk scene. As interest in hardcore vinyl has been steadily declining, I've had plenty of time to unpack and organize all of the dead stock, overstock, and ephemera from the '90s and early 2000s when running a record label and distribution totally consumed my life. It has been an interesting process clearing out storage rooms and basements looking back on what now looks like some kind of golden age for vinyl at the turn of the recent century. In an era where it is considered something of a miracle to sell three to five hundred copies of a new record, it's amazing to think that DIY hardcore bands were selling through pressings of 5,000 in just a few months not even twenty years ago. Unpacking the boxes and clearing out the storage rooms, I can't help but think about how much energy, enthusiasm, and optimism I had about hardcore in those days. It now seems insane that I was printing 5,000 covers and inserts at a time for each release. I have to tell you, it has been bittersweet filling recycling dumpsters with deadstock covers and inserts from this bygone era of hardcore. Slamming the lid on a cardboard recycling dumpster with about 20,000 covers and inserts in it is to see one's life's work in a dumpster. This is demoralizing, to say the least. However, one thing I tell people at the record store all the time is that we are surrounded mostly by our mistakes, whereas our successes are gone in the blink of an eye. Having a storage room full of records no one wants makes me wonder where I went wrong. But what I don't see is a half a million or so records that have already shipped around the world and are in collections. I spend a lot of time in a basement workroom surrounded by 40,000 records not too many people are buying, but it overlooks the fact that I've pressed and shipped out about 600,000 records plus many other distributed titles in the last twenty-something years. I'm sure it's the same at any record store the stock looks dull and picked over, but this never takes into account years of turnover and churn. Since I was a teenager I have been a champion of lost causes: the IWW, the Russian and Spanish Anarchists, the '60s radical movement, 77 Punk, '80s hardcore, and now '00s hardcore. I have come to terms with the idea of being a throwback to a bygone era and still waving the flag for hardcore as the rest of the scene move on. I spent much of the late '80s and early '90s hoping hardcore would make a comeback. When if finally did I threw everything into it. I fell short of my lofty goals, but in retrospect I guess I did OK, or at least that's what I need to keep telling myself to keep from being crushed under the weight of dead stock vinyl that is there to remind me.

There is no doubt that punk in Minneapolis started at a downtown dive bar called the Longhorn. This is where out of town bands like the RAMONES and the DEAD BOYS played on tour and local bands like the SUICIDE COMMANDOS played their gigs. One of the bands synonymous with the Longhorn are the HYPSTRZ. A project by garage rock veterans the Batson Brothers who previously had a band called KUSTOM AND THE KRUISERS and later formed the MIGHTY MOFOS, the HYPSTRZ combined HYPE and HIP decades before the term "hipster" was one of ironic derision. The HYPSTRZ recorded an outstanding live set at the Longhorn in 1979. The band self released a 7" with a few features from this set. More of the set was later released as an LP, *Hypstrization!*, by Voxx and much much later, a CD of the full set was released by Bomp!. The HYPSTRZ only played covers. Their set was a raging revue of revved up rock and R&B standards of the '60s, but played at high speed and with high energy. I normally don't care much for live records, but you can't really conceive of a cover revue band playing party rock standards except as a live record. And this record delivers the goods, punked up versions of garage rock classics like the BLUES MAGOOS, FLAMIN GROOVIES, MITCH RYDER, 13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS, QUESTION MARK AND THE MYSTERIANS, the SONICS, and local band the LITTER, plus some R&B standards like JAMES BROWN, SAM AND DAVE, and WILSON PICKETT. You can only imagine how much fun this kind of thing was to experience live back in 1979 during the days when only a handful of record collectors were jocking these tunes and the airwaves were dedicated to ABBA, BEE GEES, and ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA. The *Hypstrization!* LP IS worth seeking out, and the full set (from the CD) is available online, although this band's name makes them hard to search on the internet. Local music historian and record peddlEr Go Johnny Go has also ripped some of their cassette releases to his site. The HYPSTRZ 7" is a bargain and sells for under $10 all the time. I've picked up copies outside Minnesota for as little as $2 or $3. This band helped serve as an introduction to '60s garage rock for me. When I was younger, I kept this kind of music at arm's length. It seemed to be stuck in the past, apolitical and escapist. Also, the fan base were all these old guys telling me how much better bands were back in the day. While all of that is still probably true, the music is undeniably great fun. In this era of darkness, perhaps some escapist party music might be in order from time to time. So crank up the HYPSTRZ' *Live at the Longhorn* and party like it's 1979.



As everyone knows by now, the printed version of *Maximum Rocknroll* is set to end after three more issues. Wrapping my head around the end of something I love that has existed my entire life is proving a bit difficult. Having grown up in the industrial suburbs of the East Bay, I've been an *MRR* shitworker on and off since the mid-'90s. I got into teenage arguments with Tim Yo (in his last couple years) about what was or wasn't punk enough to get covered in the magazine. I hammered out my first column ("No.," mostly composed of semi-educated stabs at radical politics) from 1999 to 2007, have played in bands that were on MRR comps and played a bunch of MRR benefits plus the Still Not Quiet on the Western Front Fest a couple years back, and I have actually read the whole magazine cover to cover more than twice.

Sometime after my old column ended, I was able to score enough financial aid to go to college, and slowly morphed from a wildass punk pinko freak scumbag into to a wildass punk pinko freak scumbag teacher. In 2015, I was given the go-ahead by Grace Ambrose to start the Teaching Resistance column—an

amazing opportunity to help signal boost and center the voices of radical punk educators from all over the world, and getting to hear and understand the ideas and perspectives of all these inspirational people is something that I have been very grateful for.

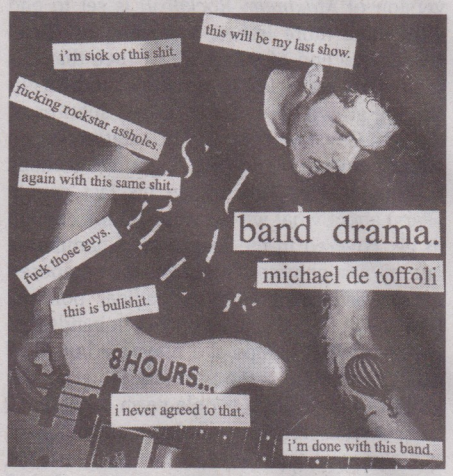
Through all of the years, I've always been impressed at the mag's dedication to staying politically radical and confrontational, not afraid to call out oppressive bullshit in the macro and micro scales even in the face of reactionary currents coming from all directions—including those very much within punk, and sometimes even from people around the magazine. As such, *MRR* has been a natural fit for the Teaching Resistance column the last four years. The print mag had a good run, and I look forward to whatever the future may hold for Maximum and the dynamic, radical punks that make up its core collective.

Whatever plans *MRR* has (and I hope they eventually include some print media again), Teaching Resistance will not end.

A book, ***Teaching Resistance: Radicals, Revolutionaries, and Cultural Subversives in the Classroom***, will be released in Fall 2019 on PM Press, featuring expanded / updated versions of the best columns from the last four years plus lots of exclusive content, including an epic interview with Martin Sorrondeguy and the game-changing "Towards an Anarchist Pedagogy" by Ron Scapp.

There will be guest columnists in the final two issues, and updates as to where the column will be published next—so please keep telling the radical punk teachers you know to submit their ideas, and that there is a place where their perspective is always welcome.

–John No, Teaching Resistance editor, teachingresistance@gmail.com



Bandmates require time, attention, patience, forgiveness, stimulation, trust, and a general sense of commitment, same as a partner, and I believe that band relationships are just as important as any romantic relationship. They'll become a part of your life, good or bad, and if you're going to stay together all these things need to be addressed. That's what this column is here for: to discuss why bands fight, why bands work or don't work, why bands succeed, and why bands break up. In almost every way this is kind of a relationship column, to examine the fragile relationships that you have with your bandmates.

Wow, this feels really good. March of last year was the first official Band Drama column, and these last twelve months have been very helpful and therapeutic. When I first pitched this column to *MRR*, they asked if my current bandmates would be cool with it, and if so, or if not, that might make for an interesting read. So, for this first year anniversary I would like to address that. When I was planning this column out, I started by writing a list of possible topics to cover and I had quite a few that I would be able to pull from each month. Interestingly enough, for twelve months now something new has come up between mytwo2 bands that I have needed to talk out and work through, so this whole thing has been poignant to my life as it's unfolding and equally beneficial to how I've gone about handling it as they come. That said, that does indeed mean that I'm airing out current grievances in my current relationships with my bandmates in a magazine that's distributed world wide. So that initial question was, how do they feel about that? The short answer is that they don't know. The full answer is that they're not interested.

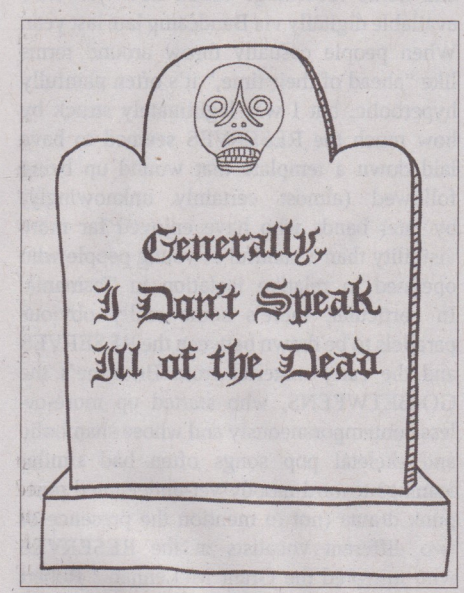
I started writing for *MRR* as a demo reviewer in the summer of 2015, and my excitement for the opportunity wasn't shared. This has been a lifelong passion of mine, and I never in a million years believed that it was something that I could accomplish, so I've approached everything humbly and with all of my effort, and I don't think that they understood it. In my post-rock band, from day one they called me a nerd for trying to be a writer, and any time I've had to be late to practice because it's new issue day and I want to contribute, they'd see it as me wasting time pretending that my contribution mattered. I guess I understand that they don't recognize how important it is to punk rock in general to allow punk bands a platform to get themselves out there seeing as they've never experienced this community. It's rough when they rip on me, but it hasn't changed my opinion of what I do at *MRR*.

My punk band's reaction was the one that hurt. My buddy was the head of distribution at that time, and he was the one that first brought me into the compound. His bandmates were there with him all the time and were always really helpful, which was so inspiring to witness. They genuinely really supported him and what he was doing, so they jumped right in to give him a hand. They'd help with distro, paperwork, mail, they'd drive with him to the post office and help him deliver the subscriptions, and all because they were proud of him. I think it really helped them as a band, and I wanted to extend that opportunity to my band. When I first told them that *MRR* was going to let me start writing demo reviews, they really didn't care. I tried to explain all that it meant to me and what an opportunity it could be for us to get involved and meet amazing people. They shot it down right away. The only time it was ever brought up was when they wanted something, like promoting a show or finding a new band to share the studio. They'd say "well you're mister big time writer punk guy, right? Can't you get them to make that shit happen?" I'd invite them to the house and they'd say they don't work for free. Even just to see it, they didn't care. At one point, about a year in, I wanted to get more involved in the magazine, which would mean dedicating more of my time and putting myself out there more, which was scary. I was insecure and not sure I was ready for that kind of commitment and I really needed a friend in that moment. I remember we were standing in the parking lot of our studio when I told them this, and I asked them point blank if they'd support me the way my buddy's band supported him with distro. They told me very sincerely and directly, no, and that they didn't want to talk about it again.

So there it is. Each of my bands have made it very clear to me that they don't feel the need to support *Maximum Rocknroll* or my involvement, and they don't intend to. Therefore I don't think they should get to know about this column. If they found out I was writing about the drama that we go through as a band, I'm sure they'd pay attention right away, but honestly I don't think they deserve that. If they ever wanted to reach out and take interest in what I'm doing, then I'll absolutely talk to them about the column, but I genuinely don't think that they deserve to know if they refuse to make an effort in the first place. Because of this, I feel that what I write and the music that I make with my bands are two different worlds, and they've expressed that they don't want to be a part of this one. That said, I'm not upset about this. I've learned that not everyone is going to share your same interests and trying to push them onto people is only going to make them dig their heels in more. So if they aren't interested in *Maximum Rocknroll*, then that's fine with me, and I honestly don't need them to be. After all of that, I do want to express that I'm actually not here to talk shit at all. I'm always vague about incidents that we have as a band because the point of the column is to find an underlying issue and resolve it, not to point fingers or shame any one person. I'd never use their names or hint at who they really are because it's not necessary. I'm not referring to their character as people, but their actions during the incident, and I've only chosen incidents that I feel are stemmed from a bigger issue that is relatable to all independent musicians. Overall they're my friends and brothers / sisters and I want us to succeed as much as I want all punks to succeed.

Each month BAND DRAMA will either be reviewing a universal issue that all bands face, or I'll be reviewing one of your band's issues.

If you'd like a fresh perspective, advice, or just to vent in general (anonymously or not) reach out to banddramamrr@gmail.com. So far the only person that has reached out has been my mom, and that was just to tell me that she liked the column and was proud of me, (Hi Mom!!), and just to be clear she doesn't have any drama with any of her church bandmates, even Eileen who can admittedly be kind of an asshole to her sometimes. So here's hoping that this year someone will be brave enough to put themselves and their band out there. Also, this year I want to be more proactive about talking to punks in person about any of their band drama stories that they'd be willing to share, so look forward to that. Much love to all of my bandmates past and present, and for all the shitty times we've been through, we always have good times that make up for it. Except for that one time in Olympia which was totally fucked up and I'm still not over that shit at all. Fuck him for that, seriously. I don't think I will ever be able to look at him the same way again. Fuck him for that.



I have a problem: I don't really care about lyrics. When I read lyrics sheets, I tend to be left flat—sometimes confused by their overly metaphorical, private language, and sometimes simply unmoved. I can listen to a song dozens of times without being able to repeat any of its lyrics. Many of my favorite tunes are instrumental. Some are in foreign languages that I have, at best, a cursory knowledge of. And yet, I enjoy them without needing the added layer of lyrics (or understanding the lyrics).

But, I still enjoy the sound of a human voice, and thus, I have a disproportionate love of nonsense songs—songs that can be enjoyed without trying to process the lyrics. So, here is a list of my favorite nonsense songs. I don't mean that in the sense of songs like "I Am the Walrus." While that song is nonsensical, it has actual words and much time could and has been spent discussing their meaning. For the purposes of this list, I am only including songs that have no actual words. These songs contain vocals for the vast majority of their duration, but all of their lyrics are complete gibberish. Sh-boom, let's begin:

ADRIANO CELENTANO – "Prisencolinensinainciusol"

ADRIANO CELENTANO was one of the first Italian rock'n'rollers. His career started as a third rate imitation of Elvis Presley—even earning the nickname "the Flexible One" for his wide-legged, hip gyrating Elvis imitation. Adriano was, however, continuously vexed by the predilection of young Italians towards English language songs. He knew that the vast majority of them could speak little or no English, but still had a strong preference for English—and specifically American—Music, partially due to its perceived authenticity. So, Adriano (knowing no English himself), came up with a scheme: He would write a song that simply sounded like English. With the exception of a few instances of "all right," "Prisencolinensinainciusol" contains no actual intelligible lyrics. Its lyrics are all gibberish, but Celentano had massive experience affecting an American accent from his years of doing Elvis, Chuck Berry, and Fats Domino covers. His lyrics were meant to mimic the sounds that he often heard in English songs, and coupled with his faux-southern accent, the song ended up sounding—to its Italian audience—as if it were English. If you've ever wanted to know what English sounds like to people who don't speak it, this is your chance. Adriano predicted that Italians would buy anything in English, and he was right. He pulled the wool over the eyes of an entire generation of Italians, and they ate up his nonsense song. It became the second biggest hit of his career (which is staggering and spans 40 LPs). There are at least two videos from Italian TV of Celentano playing the role of English teacher to a group of young women while performing the song, with the class repeating lines to him, and Adriano nodding in approval. Later in life, Celentano would claim that the song had non-commercial meaning, saying, "I thought that I would write a song which would only have as its theme the inability to communicate. And to do this, I had to write a song where the lyrics didn't mean anything," but revisionist history of rock singers about their own work is never to be trusted.

The song was not really an aberration for Celentano, though. His covers of American rock'n'roll songs are functionally all gibberish. Since he knew no English, he had to memorize the songs phonetically, but the result is a complete and hilarious failure, with Adriano largely relying on long, open throated vowels and loose enunciation to cover up his complete lack of knowledge of the lyrics. "Spider Murphy played the tenor saxophone" ends up as "pidu urpa plaida flepa saxophone," and the lines rarely get better than that.

The CHIPS – "Rubber Biscuit"

Doo wop, as a whole, is a genre built on gibberish. The nonsense syllables used in the genre's songs are generally referred to by its admirers as "doo-wops," even if they take the form of other sounds. While "doo-wop" is itself a doo-wop, so too are "ba-doom" and "sha-na-na." In fact, on rare occasion, a backing vocalist would utter a doo-wop so catchy, that it would become the name of the song. This was the case with the CHORDS' 1954 hit "Sh-Boom." I like to imagine scores of teens sitting in their rooms, spending more time trying to come up with possible doo-wops than actual lyrics. "Should I say 'skibidamow' or 'sha-bree-da-dee-da' to signal the upcoming bridge?" and the debate might last all band practice.

Occasionally, as is the case with "Get a Job," nonsense syllables take up many measure, maybe even a whole chorus before any real lyrics are uttered in the verse. However, of the thousands of doo wop songs, I can think of only one that is comprised entirely of doo-wops: "Rubber Biscuit," sung by the CHIPS in 1956. Another feature of this song that makes it so unique and, well, insane sounding, is that the different vocalists are never singing the same syllables in unison. The bass sings "doe-doe-doe-bum"s while the top tenor ooos and the lead sings "gow-gow hummidida hummaluva." And that's the song. It's just several verses of complete and total nonsense, with several singers singing different nonsense at the same time. And, honestly, it just works. I've seen a whole van of seasoned punks erupt with unbridled joy and astonishment at the intensity and fervor that the CHIPS deliver.

Now, there are words in the song, but I hesitate to call them lyrics. In the break between each verse, a very creamy-voiced, albeit hungry baritone speaks to us about his diet. He tells a one-line joke about a "wish sandwich," a "ricochet biscuit" and a "cool water sandwich." But, he delivers these jokes surrounded by dead silence. The music totally stops and the words are delivered tunelessly and timelessly between sections of music. The musical sections, which take up the vast majority of the song's run time, contain only doo-wops.

INTERNATIONAL Q – "Small Talk"

It would be nearly impossible for me to

choose my favorite early Connecticut punk band. But I could undeniably tell you my favorite song (with apologies to the BATS' "Popgun" and the FURORS' "Her Other Man"). INTERNATIONAL Q's "Small Talk" is one of two songs I've ever heard that has extensive vocals but no consonant sounds (the other being the "Humming Chorus" from Giacomo Puccini's 1904 opera *Madama Butterfly*). But "Small Talk" is not melismatic. Each note is sung on a different vowel, with a glottal stop separating each sound. The result is an insane, upbeat, and frantic KBD gem.

By naming the song "Small Talk," the band is ascribing some meaning to the song, but "phatic conversation is trivial" is such a banal stance in itself that I won't disqualify this song from my list for having a dash of meaning. Plus, it's way too catchy to be ignored.

Adverse Habitat is the debut LP from Berlin's dystopian future-punks EXIT GROUP, with members who have previously been involved with the very like-minded USELESS EATERS and DRY ERASE. Dark, propulsive bass lines and frenetically precise drumming push each of the songs forward, with jagged bursts of guitar and sinister electronic flourishes left as the only elements in the mix to cut into the group's rhythmic tunnel vision. TOTAL CONTROL and RANK/XEROX would be the most obvious touchstones, while the dry, dispassionate vocals and repetition of short, urgent phrases ("*right-wing holiday*" in "The Butcher," or "*American export / American fear*" in "Chained Up Against the Ritual Critique," or "*21st century acts of indulgence*" in "Constant Punishment") seem to ideologically and stylistically align EXIT GROUP with the recent crop of UK post-punk outfits like SARCASM and STRUCTURE lodging their own serrated critiques at capitalist consumerism and nightmare politics. There's always bound to be some omissions and oversights when you have to put together a year-end list before the year in question has actually ended, but EXIT GROUP could have easily made my 2018 shortlist if I'd just heard this record a little sooner. (Castle Face, exitgroup.bandcamp.com)

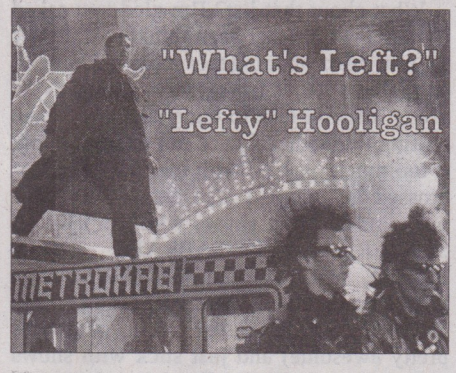
I booked a Portland show for DIVORCER from Vancouver, British Columbia back in 2017, when they'd only been together for a couple of months and had just a song or two up as online demos—they totally floored me live and I was really anxious for them to put out some full recordings, but shortly after that tour, they found themselves much more geographically dispersed and the group was forced into a bit of a hiatus. So, one of the first positive developments of weirdo DIY in 2019 has been finally seeing them release their debut cassette, *Debt Jubilee*, and on the excellent UK-based label Comfortable on a Tightrope, at that. Bassist Katie also plays in the Montreal-via-Vancouver quartet TOUGH CUSTOMER, and DIVORCER definitely occupy a very similar aesthetic space as that project: zig-zag rhythms, elastic bass at the forefront, vocals veering from sweetly sung to chanted with total detachment, and simultaneously surreal and hyper-literal lyrics touching on everything from jacuzzis to coin-operated laundry. Synth and viola add some really unique dimensions to their otherwise sparse and wiry bent-pop framework, with a playfulness and wry sense of humor in the tradition of early '80s art-schooled post-punk heroines like Y PANTS and OH-OK. But much like those groups, DIVORCER don't shy away from addressing more serious (and often explicitly feminist-informed) lyrical topics, even if it's through a certain level of abstraction and deconstruction—one of the most affecting tracks on *Debt Jubilee* is "Half a Time," where the lines "*I can make myself nothing / I can make myself real small / I can make myself nothing / to be palatable*" take on even more emotional weight as delivered against little more than stark scratches of strings and percolating keyboard. (Comfortable on a Tightrope, divorcer.bandcamp.com)

The STACHES (recently transplanted to Leipzig, Germany from Geneva, Switzerland) are part of the tangled web of projects featuring Charlotte Mermoud and Lise Sutter—both are in the great minimal wave-influenced MARAUDEUR, and Sutter is behind the similarly-minded solo endeavor PURPUR SPYTT. With their scrappy synthesis of raucous garage rock and first-wave punk influences, the STACHES have always been a little more straightforward and linear than either MARAUDEUR or PURPUR SPYTT, although the shared DNA between the three projects is definitely reflected in the STACHES' emphasis on whirring synths and dual deadpan vocals from Mermoud and Sutter. Their most recent single on Six Tonnes de Chair takes an unexpected sharp turn toward sparse, bass-driven post-punk, with two new songs that could have easily fit in on the latest records from either of the group's side gigs. "The Great Depression" spins out from a choppy, stop-start rhythm that's more in line with late '70s / early '80s Rough Trade-adjacent DIY (calling all pragVEC fans!) than anything they've done before, complimented by an absolutely perfect writhing bass line and a flurry of synth buzz that builds up until the song completely collapses. On the B-side "You Are Still a Stranger," they slow down slightly from the flip's frantic art-punk rush, with overlapping monotone lyrical recitations over some almost SWELL MAPS-ish off-kilter percussion and sneaky guitar. A total dynamite single, and a really promising sign of things to come if they continue to explore this particular path. (Six Tonnes de Chair, sixtonnesdechairrecords.bandcamp.com)

Shout out to my friend Chris for bringing a lost late '70s band from Hobart, Australia called the RESERVES to my attention, after they made a collection of very lo-fi live and home recordings called *Look for Wire* available digitally via Bandcamp late last year. When people casually throw around terms like "ahead of their time," it's often painfully hyperbolic, but I was legitimately struck by how much the RESERVES seemed to have laid down a template that wound up being followed (almost certainly unknowingly) by later bands who have enjoyed far more visibility than a handful of young people who operated in relative isolation in Tasmania. In particular, there's some really obvious parallels to be drawn between the RESERVES and the early material from Brisbane's the GO-BETWEENS, who started up more-or-less contemporaneously and whose shambolic and skeletal pop songs often had similar leanings toward moody-yet-understated post-punk drama (not to mention the presence of two different vocalists in the RESERVES who mirrored the Grant McLennan / Robert Forster songwriting dichotomy). But beyond that, the bittersweet jangle of "Robbery" brings to mind an Australian precursor to Bill Fox's incredible mid-'80s Cleveland group the MICE, and at their most melodic (see: "Shattered Revolt" and "What's That You Say?"), you could even trace a clear line from the RESERVES to the ragged melodies of early-to-mid '80s Kiwi groups like the CLEAN and the BATS that would soon come to be mythologized as the "Flying Nun sound." Which is not to say that there wasn't any backwards-gazing going on here, as evidenced by the raw cover of "Pink Flag" that closes *Look for Wire* and gives the album title some particularly illuminating context, but the fact that the RESERVES were doing all of this in 1978 or 1979 is pretty incredible. Essential listening for enthusiasts of the most

forgotten corners of the international DIY pop underground. (heymook.bandcamp.com)

Say hey at ripitupstartagain@gmail.com, more sights and sounds at futuresandpasts.org.



[The Motherfuckers are] a street gang with analysis.
—Osha Neumann

Fuck shit up!
—hardcore punk catchphrase

Conservatives are the new punk.
—alt-right-lite catchphrase

When I read Michael "Bommi" Baumann's political memoir *Wie Alles Anfing/How It All Began* in 1979, about his experiences as a West German urban guerrilla, I took to heart his slogan: "Words cannot save us! Words don't break chains! The deed alone makes us free! Destroy what destroys you!" The feeling behind his words resonated with the aggressive, direct action-oriented anarchism I'd developed since 1968, but by the late '80s I'd abbreviated those sentiments into the phrase "fuck shit up." Fuck shit up was a hardcore punk war cry. Bands from USELESS PIECES OF SHIT to BLATZ wrote songs with the saying in the title and the lyrics. There's no more punk an expression than "fuck shit up," which is abbreviated FSU in graffiti.

An organization of punks arose in the Boston area in the early '90s also called Fuck Shit Up / FSU, started by Elgin James. James was a mixed-race orphan raised by peace-and-love hippie foster parents who preached pacifism but subjected Elgin to a harmful home environment of alcohol and drug abuse. He reacted to his parents by becoming straightedge and rejecting their pacifism for the Black Power philosophy of Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael, and the Black Panther Party, ultimately embracing the aggressive ideals of hardcore punk rock. Running afoul of the law, confined briefly to juvenile hall, Elgin enrolled to study pre-law but suffered brain damage from an injury incurred during a gang fight. He slowly, painfully recovered his mental and physical abilities through intense physical therapy, but remained destitute and homeless until he moved to Boston. There, he became the singer for the hardcore band Wrecking Crew in 1991 and joined a multi-racial crew of working class punk kids to form FSU, with Fuck Shit Up also coming to mean Friends Stand United and Forever Stand United.

Ostensibly aggro, straightedge and anti-racist, Boston FSU's core stance was undying loyalty to one's crew of friends defended by righteous violence. Boston FSU started by claiming to purge white power skinhead gangs from shows and the scene, then quickly moved on to taking out drug dealers. Going "right after the heart of the enemy, money," FSU robbed drug dealers, then gave half of their take to local charities and straightedge bands while keeping the remainder for themselves. FSU started an "arms for hostages" scheme to trade handguns for pit bulls used in dog fighting rings with inner city gangs. Boston FSU's reputation grew. Soon FSU chapters sprang up across the country. In 1992, I remember FSU being listed in Anti-Racist Action zines as a premier straightedge, anti-racist, hardcore punk organization, and therefore legitimate allies in the fight against white supremacy.

That didn't last. Many Boston punks considered FSU thugs and their claim to rid the scene of nazi skins bogus. FSU also targeted bouncers, scene outsiders, and civilians with what the group considered justified violence. "Fuck Nazis and dope dealers" escalated to "fuck anybody who isn't us." Ideologies grew more extreme, with hardline supplanting straightedge. Members died and chapters splintered. A number of FSU members eventually joined the Outlaws and Mongols motorcycle gangs. Violence linked to FSU in Salt Lake City—including a mob attack, McDonald's arson, and mink farm bombing—culminated in a gang-related murder in 1998, leading the FBI to declare FSU a street gang by 2009. Elgin James put out a hit on a supposed neo-Nazi and then attempted to extort money from the individual in 2005, which lead to his arrest by the FBI in 2009 and imprisonment in 2011 / 12.

So when does a crew become a gang? When FSU fell apart, James and surviving founding members formed the Foundation Fund to set up scholarships at local universities to honor dead FSU members and reflect "hardcore punk culture" and ideals. But FSU had crossed the line from scene crew to street gang long before.

Now consider another example of the use of violence in turning a crew into a gang.

Breitbart published an article entitled "Political Punks" in 2015 that featured a détourned image of the classic RAMONES picture, the four band members posed against a brick wall with their faces switched up for Greg Gutfeld, Clint Eastwood, Ann Coulter, and Gavin McInnes. One of the first uses of the spurious meme, the cliché that "conservatives are the new punk" has become a mantra for McInnes and his ilk ever since.

McInnes was born in Britain of Scottish parents who migrated to Canada when he was a child. He played in the Ottawa punk band ANAL CHINOOK and founded Vice with Shane Smith and Suroosh Alvi in Montreal in 1994, exhibiting from the beginning his propensity for provocation, right-wing culture jamming, and countercultural cooptation. McInnes almost single handedly manufactured the gentrifying, mostly white, male and young hipster subculture. He was bought out by his two Vice partners in 2008 and, fancying himself a comedian, writer, actor and businessman, he attempted various marginal commercial ventures. But by 2012 his increasingly right wing trajectory was apparent. He peddled transphobia, founded his own news commentary internet show and advertising company, and became a regular contributor for Rebel Media, Infowars, and Fox News. He wrote for more overt paleoconservative / white supremacist media like TakiMag, American Renaissance, and VDARE. And McInnes founded the Proud Boys (PB) in 2016 just prior to being employed by CRTV in 2017.

What the MONKEES were to music, the PB are to politics—a cleverly constructed and recruited group designed to appeal to a carefully targeted demographic. And like hipsterism before, the PB were mostly concocted by Gavin McInnes, whose leadership has been equal parts deflection and "balls out" bullshit. He has constantly declared the PB multiracial and gay friendly, yet its membership remains overwhelmingly young, white, and hetero. From its retro right-wing ideology (anti-feminist pro-family, free enterprise small government, anti-Muslim "Western chauvinism") to its goofy ritualism (Disneyesque name, Broadway themed anthem, five cereal *faux* beatdown initiation) and pseudo-Masonic trappings (pledging, graduated system of "degrees," Fred Perry "uniforms") the PB as a fraternal organization boils down to drinking and fighting, in McInnes's own words. And despite simply wanting to enjoy a drink with "his boys" and a little spurious charity work, McInnes is all about the fighting, having declared "I want violence, I want punching in the face. I'm disappointed in Trump supporters for not punching enough." He amended the PB with a "fourth degree initiation" where "We don't start fights [...] but we will finish them."

What this has meant in practice publicly

COLUMNS

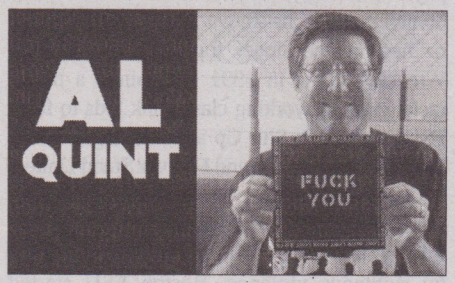
is overt provocation, intentional aggression, and targeted violence by the PB. At New York University, in Berkeley, California, in Portland, Oregon, and mostly recently at the New York Metropolitan Republican Club, the PB have squared off against antifa in alliance with assorted white supremacist (Identity Evropa, 211 Boot Boys) and patriotic militia (Oath Keepers, III Percenters) groups. Acting as "founder, not fuhrer," McInnes proclaimed after Charlottesville that the PB can't have white supremacist alt-right members while at the same time declaring that white supremacy doesn't exist. This leaves the PB free to associate and openly work with the racist alt-right as a rightwing alt-lite ally. The PB may have started as a joke, but it's far from a goof that simply got out of hand. McInnes deliberately fanned the PB's violent rhetoric, hyperbolic claims, and collusion with white supremacy. In turn, this allowed McInnes to transform the burgeoning PB from a contrived crew to an ersatz gang specializing in bodyguard muscle, anti-antifa vigilantism, and general rightwing mayhem. The MONKEES, after all, were quite popular and had a decent following even when they were purely corporate tools.

I viewed the brutal Boston Beatdown videos and realized that six or seven charismatic individuals besides Elgin James were behind FSU's power and draw. When I saw Gavin McInnes's rambling, incoherent video distancing himself from the PB and the "Proud Boys 9" "for their own good" now that that the FBI unofficially consider them extremists, I could feel the palpable fear of a RICO anti-organized crime indictment looming over McInnes's resignation action. McInnes had become the clownish ex-hipster Mussolini of a suburban gang without analysis. Now that an "Elders Chapter" and Chairman Enrique Tarrio are officially the boss of this so-called "Western chauvinist" fraternity, few think the PB will remain the leading alt-right-lite organization tasked as GOP enforcers and anti-antifa vigilantes. Some are predicting sectarian battles and splits. Others believe the PB will gradually fade into obscurity. But the PB might yet linger. To Mao's famous dictum "if you don't hit it, it won't fall" I'd like to add the anarchist caveat:

"If it doesn't fall, you didn't hit it hard enough!"

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA: *You can download free EPUB, MOBI, PDF, and DOCX files of my latest cyberpunk mystery story "The Death of David Pickett" at 62milepress.com/the-death-of-david-pickett.*

To find links to my blogs, websites, Facebook, and Instagram, visit my social media aggregator at gamatiasz.com. You can purchase copies of my near-future science fiction thriller "1% Free" through either site.



PEARL HARBOR AND OTHER LIVE MUSICAL EXPLOSIONS

So the month this issue sees print will also be the 40th anniversary of the CLASH's first US jaunt, the six show Pearl Harbor '79 tour. The Boston—actually Cambridge—show was on February 16, 1979 at the Harvard Square Theater. It also happened to be the first real "rock concert," i.e. one in a seated venue, that I ever attended. I was a freshman at Boston University and, believe it or not, I'd never gone to any concerts prior to that. It wasn't because my parents wouldn't allow it, although they didn't exactly encourage it, either. It probably was because I didn't have a whole lot of friends and no one who suggested venturing into town to see AEROSMITH, SWEET, BLUE ÖYSTER CULT, or any of the other favorites of my youth.

Seeing the CLASH wasn't a bad way to pop my concert cherry. I'd been a fan for the better part of two years at that point, being blown away by their first album, the various singles and the recently released *Give 'Em Enough Rope*. I was excited to find out they'd be playing in the area. Tickets went on sale at the Strawberries record store in Kenmore Square (where the legendary Rat club was) and I purchased one for the princely sum of $7.50. It's a good thing I did because the show sold out quickly. Since I still hadn't made a whole lot of friends, including with the handful of punks in my dorm, I went solo. While waiting for the doors to open, I didn't feel as though I fit in and didn't attempt a conversation with anyone. Those feelings dissipated once the show began. Plus I ran into Jim, one of the only punks in my dorm I was friendly with, so at least there was *one* person I could talk to. A local garage-type band, the RENTALS, opened and pretty much got booed off the stage (they weren't *that* bad, though). BO DIDDLEY followed—yeah, *that* Bo Diddley, and he had the crowd eating out of his hand by the end of the set, including yours truly. He got asked back for an encore and blew a kiss to the audience while the shave 'n' a haircut shuffle got cooking again.

Then it was time for the CLASH. A multi-nation flag tapestry dropped to the accompaniment of "There's A Riot Going On" and the band charged the stage and broke into "I'm So Bored With the USA." Loud and powerful, just as I'd hoped it would be, as they ran through all my favorites in damn-the-torpedoes fashion. If I had to pick out a top ten shows that I'd seen, this one would most certainly make the list.

What about that list? I'm glad you asked or may have at least been thinking it. In my 15-plus years of doing this column, I haven't compiled a list of favorite live shows. It's a pretty difficult task to undertake and, when putting it together, I tried not to think about it too much, just go with the first ones that crossed my mind. I also decided to leave out mind-blowing shows with the likes of SLAYER, BLACK SABBATH, JUDAS PRIEST, and METALLICA (PRIEST on the "British Steel" tour or SLAYER and METALLICA in clubs? Yeah, that was pretty awesome) and just stick with shows that more or less fall under the punk category. My definition of punk is pretty broad but you get the idea. I'm also putting them in chronological order.

I should also note that, even though this list ends at 2001, that's not to mean I haven't seen any great, memorable shows since then. There have been plenty, especially in DIY spaces. I think of EEL's Jimmy Rose spark-spraying use of an angle grinder at a basement show. I think of BLOOD PRESSURE completely laying waste to the Boiler Room. Ceiling panels coming down in the Library basement space in Allston during SKITKIDS' waste-laying set, which was preceded by CITIZEN FISH. Yes, in a basement. In recent years, the common thread is mayhem or the threat of it. A feeling of potential danger, although never veering completely out of control. I might be getting too old for this shit but I keep coming back. Can you think of anything better for me to do?

KILLING JOKE, The Channel (Boston), 8/19/81

This was on KILLING JOKE's *What's THIS For* tour and it was a night of deafening, industrialized-metallic-post-punk (whew) bombast. Jaz Coleman might have been planted behind keyboards, but with his ash-streaked face and intense eyes, his presence bordered on maniacal. "Wardance" was the opening song and he punctuated the chorus with some "ha-ha-ha-ha"s that sounded like a bloodthirsty Elmer Fudd. The highlight was "Pssyche," where he skedaddled across the stage while bass-player Youth barked out the words about priests cheering "the controller" fucking nuns and having the desire to wipe out spastics (epileptics). BIG BLACK might have learned a lesson or two from these guys (we'll get to them later).

BLACK FLAG, VITAMIN, Streets (Boston), 12/26/81

First time seeing BLACK FLAG, on the "Damaged" tour, a few months after Rollins

had joined. Bill Stevenson played drums, since Robo couldn't get back in the country. I'd been to my first hardcore punk shows that fall but this was the most intense. After art-punk band VITAMIN came out dressed in drag (*that* went over about as well as you can imagine), Flag hit the stage and from the opening notes of "TV Party," it was pandemonium. People were diving from every corner, as the five piece lineup tore through their set. It was worth standing outside in the snow for what seemed like an hour, while some of the Boston Crew people made fun of my CLASH and JAM pins, and walking through the inch of whatever vile liquid was on the bathroom floor.

BAD BRAINS, Mavericks (Boston), 5/1/82

It was 1:30 AM, this tiny club in Boston's financial district had to close at 2, and there was no sign of the BAD BRAINS. Ellen and I were standing by the door, ready to leave, and then Earl Hudson walks in. OK, we're staying. Good thing, too, because once the gear was brought in with military precision and they set up without a soundcheck, there wasn't any time to spare. So there was no reggae. Just hardcore and, holy fuck, it's still one of the greatest things I've ever seen. Did I mention I'm really glad we decided to stay?

MINOR THREAT, FU'S, SS DECONTROL, the PROLETARIAT, and PROCESS OF ELIMINATION TOUR—NECROS, NEGATIVE APPROACH, MEATMEN, GANG GREEN, DYS, Gallery East (Boston), 6/12/82 and 8/13/82

OK, I'm cheating a bit here—the first two DIY hardcore shows I ever went to, at a small art gallery near South Station in Boston. You might have seen the venue listed on various Boston flyers. There were only a handful of shows in this space, which probably held 150-200 people, and those were the ones that inspired me to get more involved and begin documenting things, which I did by starting my first zine *Suburban Punk* later that summer. It was a pretty insular scene and I was on the outside or at least the periphery of it but still got caught up in it very quickly. MINOR THREAT played second on this show, because they wanted to make sure they played in case things got shut down (they didn't) and I remember focusing in on drummer Jeff Nelson's hands and being amazed at how fucking fast he played. First time seeing SSD and the PROLETARIAT, as well. At the Process show, it was one of DYS's early gigs and, my god, they were terrible at that point. GANG GREEN had an off night, too, but that was more than made up for by the touring bands, especially NEGATIVE APPROACH. If you think John Brannon is intimidating now, imagine him as a stocky, shaven-headed 21 year old with the veins bulging out of his neck. Holy…fucking…shit. You don't forget things like that.

CRUCIFIX, SS DECONTROL, DEEP WOUND, OUTPATIENTS, ALL WHITE JURY, BIU, Guiding Star Grange (Greenfield, MA), 5/14/83

I saw CRUCIFIX four times in 1983, and they're still one of the greatest live bands I've ever seen. This was the first time and the most memorable, since it was my first trip to bucolic Western Mass., the first of many jaunts I'd make for the next few years. I always loved the punks from WMass and have stayed in touch with a number of them. It had a much less pretentious and violent vibe than Boston. And look at that lineup. It was my first time seeing the OUTPATIENTS, who might be one of the most-underrated hardcore bands to come out of my home state. I'd only heard CRUCIFIX's 7" up to that point and was blown away by their over-the-top ferocity in a matter of seconds. Just fucking relentless.

BIG BLACK, VOLCANO SUNS, PUSSY GALORE, the Rat (Boston), 12/31/86

I generally avoid going to shows on New Year's Eve. In fact, this is only one of two I've attended, but there was no way I could miss this, and it more than lived up to expectations. You want dark? BIG BLACK will give you dark, culminating in a fifteen(!) minute version of "Jordan, Minnesota," a lighthearted ditty about child molestation and incest in a seemingly idyllic town, with the infamous Steve Albini yelling all sorts of awful things into the pickup of his guitar. Jarring, industrialized mayhem created by a rhythm machine monikered Roland and an incessant clatter from rumbling bass and "train" and "rocket" guitars as they were listed on their masterpiece *Atomizer* album. VOLCANO SUNS (with MISSION OF BURMA's Peter Prescott) and PUSSY GALORE were also entertaining. The latter's set was made particularly memorable by the call and response vocals between Jon Spencer and Julie Cafritz (now an adjunct English professor) on their shoulda-been smash hit "C*nt Tease."

NEW BOMB TURKS, Middle East (Cambridge), spring 1994

I can't pinpoint the exact date of this show but I'll never forget my first live encounter with the TURKS. Absolutely crazy and off the chain punk-garage-rockandfuckingroll, instigated by Eric Davidson's loopy antics. Whenever I'd see them, he had this habit of grabbing my glasses off my face. I suppose it was an acceptable price to pay for sitting on the side of stage, more or less out of harm's way, emphasis on more or less. Everything that's great about punk rock from guys who are genuine fans well-steeped in the music's history and know how to deliver.

TEENGENERATE, TT the Bear's (Cambridge), October 1995

"Where are NERVOUS EATERS? Where are QUEERS?" bellowed TEENGENERATE's guitarist / vocalist Fink before kicking into a cover of the Eaters' "Just Head". A fucking rock'n'roll tornado with the only break at the end of their set so guitarist Fifi could run to the bathroom, throw up, and come back for the encore. About half an hour long and I was in absolute awe at how much pure energy this band put out. Like NEW BOMB TURKS, their respect and knowledge of the music's history was obvious from the get-go. That was confirmed when I saw a familiar looking Japanese gentleman shopping at the record store I was employed at a year or two later. He brought a bunch of obscure punk records. While ringing up his sale, I asked if he was in TEENGENERATE and it turns out it was Fink. I had to ask because that wasn't the name on his charge card.

9 SHOCKS TERROR, LAST IN LINE, THE CONTROL, MELEE, Hampshire College Tavern (Amherst, MA), 4/28/01

I thought about picking 9 SHOCKS' first area show, which was when they played with the GAIA at the Middle East in Cambridge in March 1997. I hadn't heard of them until then and, within fifteen seconds, my jaw was on the floor. Where did these guys come from? It reminded me how great hardcore could be—a blazing tandem of Japanese, Italian, and US sounds. But I'll go with this show at a small, comfy snack bar at Hampshire College. Things were relatively sedate during MELEE and the CONTROL's sets but, after that, some people started drawing the blinds in the room. While I was standing outside, a brick of fireworks was thrown in my direction. Something crazy was definitely about to happen. Once LAST IN LINE started playing, the shenanigans began and were taken up a notch for 9 SHOCKS. We're talking fireworks, sofa cushion fights, ceiling panels down, someone attempting to push a piano into the pit (and stopped), and someone riding a bicycle in a circle. Tony Erba from 9 SHOCKS ended the set by popping a wheelie on it. I should mention that while all this was going on around them, 9 SHOCKS barely missed a note. Their playing was near-flawless. And, after all that, the college actually allowed another show there. I think the final straw was a guy running around the pit with a lit torch.

CORRECTIONS DEPT.

I made a mistake on my Best of 2018 list. SIAL's vocalist's name is Siti.

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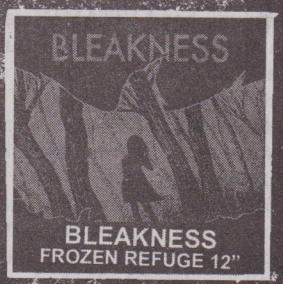

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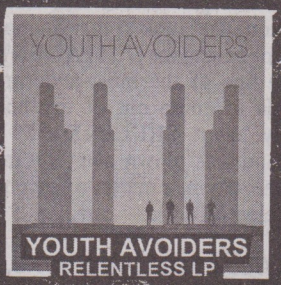

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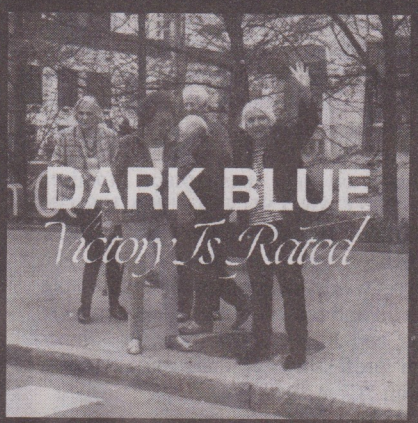

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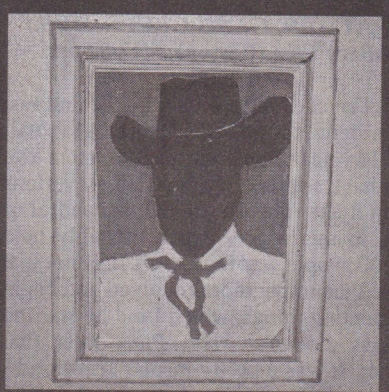

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R.I.P. TOM GUIDO

Photos provided by Laura Lee Gregory, Neala Ciccone, Andrew Rush, and Susan Davis

TOM GUIDO 1960-2019

The San Francisco music community lost one of its legends this week. Tom Guido left the scene on Monday, January 7th, 2019. When an email popped into my inbox with the subject "Shit..." and the message from Beth Allen that she just heard Tom Guido had died, I didn't want to believe it. As the day progressed and the details began to emerge about the stabbing, it just seemed too surreal. Leave it to Tom to go out in such a dramatic fashion. I would not expect anything less.

To say Tom Guido was a character is an understatement. I met Tom in 1991 at my birthday party at Epicenter Zone, the MRR-affiliated, long-gone record store. A few months later at a party, I was standing on the stair landing to the second floor. I jokingly told Tom he couldn't come up the stairs, he went off on me in what I would soon come to know as his classic form, telling me that he has been in the scene much longer than me and I couldn't tell him that he couldn't go upstairs, etc. I told him I was just joking and he calmed down. We got along better after getting that out of the way.

Tom loved '60s garage music. He put on shows and DJed under his Fuzz Club moniker around town at The Chameleon, Zeitgeist and Noc Noc. I would see him at shows and parties. He worked at Rough Trade Records on Haight Street where he famously asked one of the local newspaper music critics if she was buying the Fugazi album for her son. He popped up on an ESPN TV clip where he said Candlestick Park should be renamed Beatles Stadium instead of 3Com Park.

Then in 1993, Tom opened the Purple Onion. The legendary, but abandoned nightclub in San Francisco's North Beach district had gone into disrepair after its comedy heyday in the 1960s and spent some time as a gang hangout in the '80s. Tom's Purple Onion was a true DIY endeavor. With help from some friends, the club was cleaned and renovated. It still maintained its '60s vibe with the mirrored back wall and red vinyl booths, not to mention the unreliable plumbing. You descended the stairs from the street to get in the basement club. Tom was the booker, the promoter, the soundman, the MC. The beer was cheap and the bands were cool.

At the time, I was doing a radio show on KUSF. Tom and I had similar musical tastes. Tom would call me up and tell me who was playing at the Purple Onion. I would promote the shows and give away tickets. I also played in bands. Tom gave my band Blank Pile our first show on July 2nd, 1993. Tom would let me put together bills. He would call me when he needed another band to fill out a lineup. I had a birthday party at the Purple Onion. But mostly I just went to hang out there and enjoy the show.

Tom was part of the show. He would yell at the band while they were on stage. He would also berate the audience. He would grab the mic and ask

them, "Do you want to change the channel?" meaning get this band off the stage and get the next one. Tom booked garage, pop and punk bands, some of who would go on to legendary status. The audience was filled with all the music freaks. It was a great time.

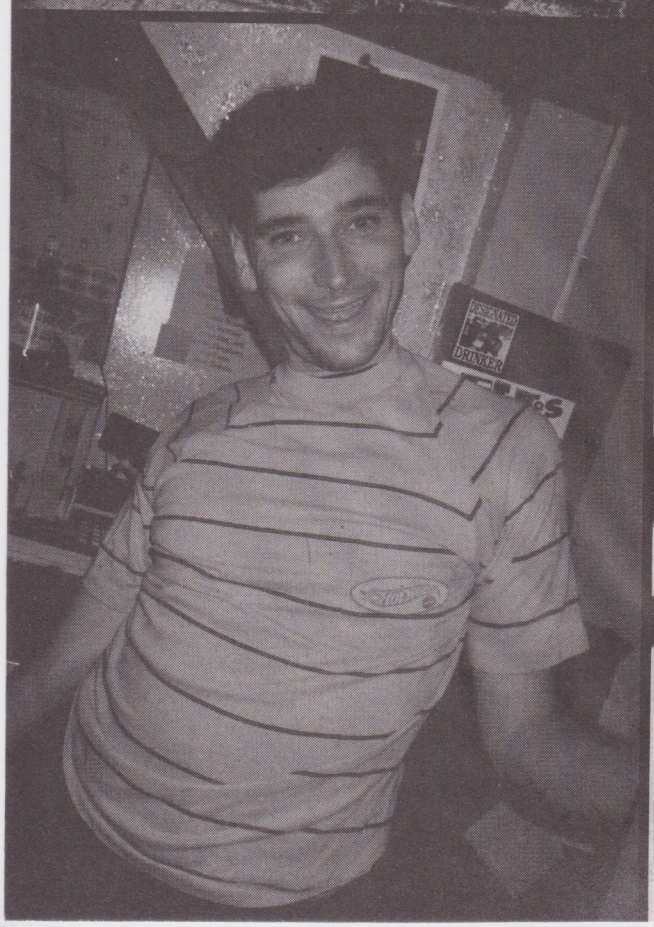
Unfortunately, the fun couldn't last. An enthusiastic attitude and love of music does not pay the bills. The rent didn't get paid. Bands got stiffed and moved their shows elsewhere. The PA equipment broke down and wasn't replaced. The beer deliveries stopped coming. The Purple Onion closed in 1999.

Although I didn't get to see Tom as much after the closing, he would show up every now and then. He appeared at Budget Rock and Rotfest shows. He called in to make a request when I was doing a radio show on KALX one morning. Although he didn't realize he was calling me, I recognized his voice right away. He showed up at a Sonics show at the Fillmore. He didn't have a ticket and I had an extra one so I gave it to him. It became like a celebrity sighting.

When he moved to Post Street I would see him a bit more. He excitedly told me after moving in that he now had three jobs including helping at the corner store when they received deliveries. I invited him to DJ with me at one of my monthly gigs at the Hemlock Tavern. He never took me up on it.

The world lost a true original. There will never be another Tom Guido. I know everyone always talks about rock'n'roll heaven and what a great jam session is happening there or whatever cliché thing. Now there is finally someone to run the place properly. Imagine the Purple Onion without the financial constraints. Free admission, free beer and all the best bands. I'd also like to imagine Tom telling Jerry Garcia to get off the stage. Goodbye Tom. You will be missed.

—Carolyn Keddy



THIS IS MY HAPPINING AND IT FREAKS ME OUT!!!

On Wednesday, January 9th, 2019, 12:16 PM, I get a text message from veteran underground Bay Area music supporter Carolyn Keddy. It reads, "Hi. Bad news. Tom Guido has died. Sorry to tell you by text." I replied with, "Where, how, why…?" She said, "The police think it was a homicide!" "Sheesh, Guido," I thought, "what the fuck have you got yourself into this time???"

In the early '90s, in San Francisco, there lived this very unique individual named Tom Guido. He was a little older than some of us, and a little mysterious to some of us…and there were lots of us who thought he was a stark raving lunatic!!!! But, he was the kind of fellow that was bound to become something of a legend. I personally never had a good grasp of his background…but rumor has it that Tom was a Texas boy, and went to Kent State in Ohio. None of us knew THAT Tom…

When Tom arrived in San Francisco in the '80s, he was an eccentric '60s music aficionado with a Price Valliant haircut!!! He wore dirty Beatle-boots, moss-green corduroy trousers, and striped T-shirts. He had a scruffy five o'clock shadow, took meds, drank beer, smoked dope, collected records, and rode a skateboard. He was manic, brilliant, hilarious, dangerous and childlike, with loads of personality… a real one-man show. THIS was the Tom that we knew…

In the late '80s / early '90s, Tom did a floating club in various locations in town called Fuzz Club, where he would DJ and host local Bay Area garage bands. BUT, apparently, Tom had an inheritance...and with it, he did something fantastic for the music community!!! In the summer of '93, Tom Guido re-opened the legendary Purple Onion nightclub in North Beach!!! It had originally been a hot spot back in the '60s and showcased acts such as Lenny Bruce and the Smothers Brothers. But under Guido's management, it immediately became the home to all the freaks, misfits, record-collector nerds, bozos, druggies, garage monsters, social miscreants, egomaniacs, posers, noise-merchants, punks, drunks, exhibitionists, psychopaths, music-snobs, hose-jobs, bike-messenger losers, and loads of other really cool people. The Purple Onion literally turned into a community overnight!!!

By the end of '93, people were visiting from all over the world to see bands perform at the Onion, and to be amused by Tom's outrageous behavior!!! Word was out that Tom ran his club in an unorthodox manner, and some people came just to see that. Tom had the reputation of being manic, and causing chaos in his own club. He would argue with and insult punters from the stage. He would tell bands to get off the stage when they bored him. He would pick fights and run around naked. He attempted to work the door, bar, and stage by himself most of the time...and did it while drunk, or loaded on something. He was terribly funny, witty, and sweet some nights... and he could be paranoid, moody, and real bitchy on others. Tom was a genuine wild card...there was nothing pretentious about him.

In the mid '90s, the Purple Onion was at its peak in popularity. It was thee place in San Francisco to play. Loads of out-of-town, out-of-state, and out-of-the-country bands were playing there every single weekend. It became notorious, like the Masque in LA, or the Rat in Boston, or dare I say CBGB's in NY...and all the locals knew they had something real good!!! Tom was a diverse booker. The bands that came through that club were amazing. Some of them made their debut there. The list of bands that played the Purple Onion over the years is long and eclectic, but I must mention just a few. There were local acts like: 3 Stoned Men, Icky Boyfriends, Trashwomen, Countbackwards, Monoshock, Loudmouths, Phantom Surfers, Queen Cobra, Rip-Offs, Blank Pile, Lowdowns, Jack Saints, Cameltoe, Cockpit, Maybellines, Bobbyteens, Vectors and the Brain Transplants... and imports like the Smugglers, Evaporators, Teengenerate, Titans, Peebles, Registrators, Guitarwolf, Evil Hoodoo, and the 5.6.7.8.'s...and garage monsters like the Makers, Bomboras, Statics, Saturn 5, Electric Frankenstein, Neptunas, Troublemakers, Motards, Fells, Loons, Untamed Youth, and the Hi-Fives...and he booked Oi! bands like Working Stiffs, Reducers S.F., and the Templars... and let's not forget about some of the other cool shit that Tom lured into his club, such as Sky Saxon, Maureen Tucker, Davie Allen, and Ian Mitchell of the Bay City Rollers (but that's another, weird story). Even the likes of the Starlight Desperation, Dandy Warhols, and the Brian Jonestown Massacre came to be a part of the chaos. There were hundreds upon hundreds of bands that played the Purple Onion in the seven years that Tom Guido ran it, and it is amusing to think that they were all subject to his bizarre behavior.

In the Onion's heyday, a good portion of the MRR staff writers were addicted to the place. Tim Yohannan could be seen there on a regular basis. He was constantly entertained by Tom, and considered him to be more amusing than some of the bands. Jeff Bale was always there, lurking in the back. Ryan Wells and Bruce Roehrs were also regulars.

Unfortunately, by '98, the Onion was starting to decline. Tom's mental health was deteriorating, and he was bringing the club down with him. The PA was on the blink, and the good bookings were becoming far and few in between. This was due to Tom falling so far behind on his rent, that he was no longer able to properly pay the bands anymore.

In December of '99, Tom Guido's Purple Onion was permanently closed. Tom went into a depression, and dropped out of the music community for a long time. He landed a gig at the Virgin Megastore, and other odd jobs over the years. He tried to do another floating club at the Li Po Lounge in Chinatown, but that was short-lived. Tom eventually found himself homeless at times...or living with strange people.

On Monday, January 8th, 2019, at approximately 5:45 PM, Tom was fatally stabbed to death in his Tenderloin flat in downtown San Francisco. He was 58 years old. The entire music community was devastated, to say the least.

Looking back, a lot of the characters who comprised the garage music community in the early '90s were colorful, talented, eccentric, loud, intelligent, geeky, wounded people. It was kind of like a big surrogate family, and Tom was the prince of that community. Friends have described his as a fusion of Crispin Glover and Z-Man Barzell, and in my opinion, that is about as accurate as you can get. Tom was weirder than everybody else in the pack, and lived wilder than the rest of us. We all loved him, and we'll miss him so fucking much. Goodbye you crazy scorpion.

—Shane White

Also, on the subject: Former Purple Onion scenester and ex-Loudmouth Beth Allen has put together a really cool website on Tom Guido and the Purple Onion. That site does the man and his club more justice than my article. Read about all the crazy times, and look at the pictures...and there's a huge list of all the shows!!!! (bethzombie.com/purpleonion)

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HETEROFOBIA

Intro. interview. and translation by Violeta Hinojosa. Special thanks to Candice Metrailer for helping review and correct the translation.

Photos by Emiliano García, Josh Robicheaux, Gera Torres

Heterofobia is one of my all-time favorite bands from my hometown, Monterrey, Mexico. With Dani on vocals, Samara on bass, Pika on guitar, and Alex on drums, they make amazing dark post-punk noise that's intense and weird and makes you want to dance and spit on straight hardcore dudes' faces. Knowing a band like this exists among the garbage is just so refreshing.

I was lucky enough to join them on their tour around the West Coast of the US this summer with Cremalleras, which was an amazing experience. We got together in Monterrey at a friend's house and talked about this tour, their lyrics and music, and about being a queer band in Monterrey.

MRR: How did y'all start playing in bands, and what motivated you to play together?

Dani: I started seeing women who were very inspiring to me, and I just wanted to play what they played. So I started playing drums along to Riot Grrrl songs I liked. I was thirteen and the first song I learned on drums was "Jumpers" by Sleater-Kinney.

Pika: I've always liked music and I felt like the natural next step for me was to focus on an instrument, and I ended up really liking guitar. A friend who lived around my block, who's like my older brother, said "you only have to learn to do this," and he showed me how to do a power chord. He was like, "you don't have to learn anything else, you'll learn to play songs with this." So the first song I learned on guitar was when I was thirteen or fourteen and it was by Ataris. [laughter] I started playing in a band around that age...Me and other kids around the neighborhood who liked punk would get together and we tried making bands together. I was in a band for three days called Zona Escolar which was total horrible bullshit, I'm blushing just saying this. *[laughter]*

Samara: I was fourteen when I had my first band, and I was the singer. It was when I lived in Mazatlán. It was just this need or feeling of anger that led me to do it, I just wanted to release it somehow. That band lasted like six months or something, but before I was in that band I was in a music school where I played piano. Eventually I got fed up with piano and I wanted to experiment with other instruments, so I kind of started with guitar and bass. But it wasn't until Heterofobia that I played an instrument with a band.

Dani: The idea of Heterofobia just started one day, during a fanzine presentation event about feminism. Pika, Castaño (Alex) and I were there and they were talking about making a band. And I told them I had written some stuff and I really wanted to sing in a band. [Addressing Pika] Do you remember? It was at the Petiti Suiz workshop.

Pika: Oh, yeah. Well, Dani and I had another band before this, Descarnada, so we had already started playing together. But Descarnada was more of a hardcore punk kind of band, it was faster, I don't know. Dani and I just started talking at some point about darker stuff, post-punk, etc., and I told him about shoegaze and he would tell me about other stuff. And we said "Maybe it would be cool to start doing something that's more in that vein."

Dani: We just always wanted to do something like that, and I told them I had never sung before but I could do it...That's how it started. We had three band practice sessions, just the three of us, and we wanted to have someone on bass. And I had just had my birthday party and Samara was there. We talked a lot that night and she told me she played bass. And I knew she liked punk and post-punk, so I told her to join us. Next week she started rehearsing with us, and she learned the songs pretty quickly and came up with more songs for the band, which was pretty cool.

MRR: What have you released so far?

Dani: The first thing was some maquetas (demos) when we had just been playing for a few months and we recorded our rehearsal live. We then released the "Eres Tan Guapo" tape, which has nine songs. That tape later became a 7" record with six of those songs. And then we made a split tape with Cremalleras which has three songs.

Samara: Now that we've returned from our tour, I think we really really need to record new songs.

Dani: We want to include those three songs from the split on a new record, and also two other songs that weren't recorded. One of them is "Me Das Asco" ("You Gross Me Out") which is so fun for me [laughter] and I dedicate it to so many people.

Samara: I hope by the end of the year we can have everything recorded for a full LP.

MRR: I think Heterofobia's music is so particular; it seems like there's no other band in Mexico that sounds anything like it. Do you have a specific sound you want to achieve when you make songs, or is it more of a spontaneous process?

Samara: I think it just really flows. Honestly.

Dani: Yeah, there's definitely an influence we talked about at some point, but we have never wanted to sound like a certain thing, 'cause I mean, we talked about things we liked in common, but we just get together to make songs and they just come spontaneously. Sometimes Pika has something on guitar, sometimes I have something in my mind and I tell them "I'd love to have a song with a guitar that goes like this and a drum beat that's kind of like that." Sometimes Samara has a bass line. So yeah, we have an idea of what we're doing, but it's all just really unconstrained.

Samara: That comment you made about it being a very particular sound is something that we've heard from other people too, and I've thought about it and I think our individual music tastes just get connected and flow in a very good way when we're together.

Dani: Yeah, we have things in common but at the same time we all like different things.

Pika: And there's no intention or goal in our sound. It's just like we're hanging out. Nobody arrives with anything.

Dani: I don't even arrive with lyrics to our rehearsals. I write stuff as they start working on the music for a song 'cause I feel so useless. *[laughter]* I just start writing things while they do that so I don't feel totally useless.

MRR: But how would you define it? If it's possible to define, 'cause I know it's hard...

Samara: Goth angels and queer sinners. *[hysterical laughter]*

MRR: Your lyrics always seem to talk about conflicts you have with different people, or not being ordinary or part of the masses. What do you like to write about, or how do you intend to make people feel?

Dani: Generally, when I write lyrics, I like to think about something that conflicts me, something that's going on around me or that happens to me individually or something in society that bothers me. I like to rhyme sentences, so I just write a sentence and I start making rhymes that go along and around that subject. I think a lot of my lyrics are really personal. But I know a lot of people experience the same things. I talk about my experience being gay in general and also about being gay in the punk scene, 'cause we know it's supposed to be an open and liberal space but it's honestly so not the case. So it's about what I live in this society and in the punk scene being a queer person. Also I tend to talk about the violent situation we live with here in Mexico, which you know is a difficult thing.

Pika: There's also a lot of that "not being part of the norm" thing. Maybe I can't relate to a lot of Dani's experiences 'cause I'm not gay, but there are things I feel empathetic about, as I think Samara and

Castaño do as well.
Samara: Yeah.

MRR: Like, being people who can't seem to fit in?
Pika: Yes. I think it's cool the four of us got together to make this. We couldn't have been able to talk about these subjects or make this type of music separately.

Samara: Even though Dani writes the lyrics and he talks for himself as a queer or gay person, you don't need to be like that to agree or feel what he's saying.
Dani: Or empathize...Also, one of my challenges and intentions when I write lyrics is to make others feel uncomfortable. Especially heterosexual macho-core dudes at shows, I think there's stuff that really makes them uncomfortable, and I like to write stuff that I know will break their fragilities, I like to see their reactions.

MRR: Speaking of trying to stir up people's feelings, what do you think has been the reaction you've had from people in Monterrey and in Mexico to your band?
Dani: It's been weird. I think honestly we expected worse reactions, but there have been people who have freaked out about the name, and it's just like we tell them "Hey, do you really feel affected by heterophobia? Do you think it's a real thing that happens? Let me know when you get attacked on the street for being straight, that's all." You don't even have to explain a lot to them. And obviously when I'm screaming and seeing people's faces I've noticed some of them are excited and feeling what we're trying to say and there's also people who just turn around and don't want to listen to us.
Pika: When it just started there were a couple times where I was like "Really? What the fuck?"
Dani: Punks from Monterrey who tried to confront us. Just because of the name. They were like "Oh, you guys think it's okay to promote heterophobia?" *[everyone laughs and claps]* As if heterophobia was something that happened in real life.
Pika: It was hilarious.

MRR: *[laughter]* I imagine y'all picked the name precisely because of that.
Samara: Yeah.
Dani: Samara was the one who proposed that name, and when she said it I was just like, hell yeah, there's nothing better. And all the dudes that annoy us and who we don't want around are the ones who will have a problem with it, and that's OK, 'cause we don't want them at our shows, we don't want to see their faces. And despite that, there's a guy who goes to our shows and I have a personal problem with him, and he dances and sings to our songs.
Pika: *[laughter]* He sings to his own song.
Dani: There's a song I wrote about him and I've seen him dancing to it. Monterrey is bullshit.

MRR: Is it that song "Renato"?
Dani: "Renato," yeah.
Samara: Regarding the name, I think it's like, we're not going to throw the first punch, but we're going to provoke, and we're going to let them come by themselves and let them show how stupid they are.
Dani: Shit always comes afloat. And the name makes that happen, and it's cool, I think it's something that Monterrey needs because Monterrey is a fucking nest of machos.
Pika: Yes, definitely.

MRR: It's like filtering...
Pika: Exactly. It's like a filter, totally. I was telling you, at first there were some strange encounters with pseudo-intellectual punks with cheap as fuck theories, who would come to us and question us, and they would try to debate us...
Dani: One of them confronted me face to face, at an after party. And he was like "Oh hey, I have a question, why heterophobia?" so I start explaining and this dude talks over me, and he interrupts me. And I was like, "Honestly, if you want me to explain something to you, let me talk...do you think heterophobia is a real thing that affects you?" and the guy was like "Well, I dunno, that's why I ask you!" I told him, "You're never in your life going to be attacked for being straight,

you'll be holding hands with your partner in public and you'll never have to go through harassment or aggressions of any kind." The guy was like "OK, maybe you are right, maybe I just needed you to explain." I'm like, there's internet, come on, do some research, you have internet access!

MRR: Do you feel in that sense that you're alone in Monterrey, as a band who kind of sails with this flag?

Samara: No, we're not alone, but we can definitely tell there's a division. I won't say names, but for example, a few weeks ago, maybe? There was this "road to off limits" event at Café Iguana, and you'd see the flyer and all the bands there were all male.

Dani: All male! There wasn't a single band that included a woman, or a queer person. It was a fest for men made by men.

Samara: And it was a punk show, with mostly hardcore punk bands, macho hardcore. All those people who we don't get along with and don't go to our shows either, it's them. But they're not like "the punk movement."

Dani: Yeah, it doesn't affect us. We have our own thing and they have their own thing. But we're not alone. I mean, maybe right now we're the only band that talks about these subjects, I don't know if in Mexico but at least in Nuevo León. But I don't think we're alone because there are other bands who are our friends, who are with us all the time, who support us, who are always at our shows, like Lilith, Reptoides, Drama, Cavernas...They've always been there.

Pika: And all those people in those bands live in very different areas of the city. Like, Reptoides are in Santa Catarina, Lilith are in Guadalupe, Apodaca, Escobedo. In Heterofobia we are in the south of the city, in Guadalupe.

Dani: Guadaluprincess.

Pika: *[laughter]* So, it's like this really cool union of friends who all happen to have bands and have different talents. Pako is one of the most active and talented people I know, as is Dani, he does so many things all the time. And Drama are also incredible girls who do so much all the time and are so fearless. I mean, right now it isn't thaaat bad to live in Monterrey because of this group of people who's being supportive. And five or six years ago, something like this would have never happened.

Dani: *[addressing interviewer]* It was only you and me at that time! Remember?

MRR: *[laughter]* We were left alone with our souls.

Dani: When everyone left to Mexico City and we were the only ones here. That was really ugly.

Pika: That time was awful, yeah.

MRR: I really like the lyrics of your song "Sudor," which mention something about "ruidos en el techo." It's obviously a reference to an old local band in Monterrey.

Pika: That was a great band.

MRR: Do you think there's something about Monterrey's local music scene that perhaps could have shaped Heterofobia? Or what's your stance regarding this old music scene?

Dani: I fucking hate the "Avanzada Regia," greetings to them. [laughter]

Pika: *[makes vomiting sounds]*

Dani: Although I think there has definitely been an influence on us. I can personally say, when I started playing, and I didn't play that much but I went to shows, I'd see bands like Ruidos en el Techo, Mamá Burger, Dyke, bands that Violeta played in who's interviewing us [laughter], Selma Oxor, XYX, Ratas del Vaticano, Mockinpott, these were all bands of people who I really admired, I saw them from afar, and I was just like a kid and I tried to hang out with them. They suddenly became my friends and I think all those people really had an influence on me. I liked punk and other stuff, and I started to see things were happening in Monterrey, and it wasn't just like whatever, there were really amazing things. My favorite bands were Mamá Burger, Mockinpott, Ratas del Vaticano, Margaritos and Ruidos en el Techo. And it made me think "I want to play like these folks." I ended up having my band, called Macabre Party, and a person I really admired recorded us (David Rata), and I ended up playing with you in another band, and you were someone who I really admired, so playing with you for me was like an achievement, 'cause I was just a little kid that was just going to your shows. So there was definitely an influence, but not from the Avanzada regia!

MRR: It was after the Avanzada Regia, right?

Dani: Yeah, I mean, I didn't really get to see that. I'm kind of young.

Pika: Those years, from 2006 or 2007 and after, I remember that time more vividly, it really was awesome. All of those bands that were on Nene Records were awesome, and I really liked that because it was something I didn't listen to here, I maybe listened to it in like foreign records, but not here. I wasn't going to see that in a band live. The shows I used to go to were awful, they were bands playing covers of Misfits or Rancid at shitty bars. So then I found these bands and I still think they're unbelievable. Mockinpott was so awesome, it's like a band that will never happen again. I hope they read this and they get together.

Dani: I want to say that my top band from all this, and I want this to be printed, my top band was Mamá Burger, forever.

Pika: Nene Records made a lot of interesting connections, with people in the United States

and in the center of Mexico. And it was so important.
Dani: It was a point of reference and an example. I mean, Ratas del Vaticano was the first band, at least that I saw, that started touring and putting records out with labels. For me it was a real influence, I was like "I want to do what this band does." It was crazy for me.
Pika: People who are reading this, I mean, just imagine, in one weekend you could see Mockinpott, Ratas del Vaticano, Mamá Burger, Ruidos en el Techo, Margaritos, in one single show. In a Nene fest!

MRR: How about your favorite current bands in Mexico?
Pika: Apärä is the best fucking D-beat in Latin America. Caso Perdido was amazing, I hope they play again. Paulina is an amazing singer, and everyone in that band is so good musically. Reptoides too.
Dani: I personally love Riña, Drama, Reptoides, Lilith, Colapso, Dissidia, I really enjoyed their last show I saw, Apärä is a band I really enjoy seeing, Soga is awesome!
Samara: Desgrasia Jubenil.
Dani: Oh yeah! Caso Perdido. Cruz de Navajas too, that band is one of my favorites.

MRR: So would you say there are a lot of good bands in Mexico right now?
Dani: Yes! Totally. I think most of my favorite bands right now are from Mexico.

MRR: Not from the US.
Dani: No. And it's cool because they're not only my favorite bands, they're also my friends. And that's even better. And it's not like I love them because they're close friends, it's because they honestly make really fucking sick music. The US doesn't even come close to it at all.
Samara: I want to particularly note this band, it has nothing to do with punk, it's a super great band, we've seen them a few times in Mexico City. Neue Strassen.
Pika: That band is fucking sick!
Dani: Yes! They're one of my favorites too. And this band from Monterrey which also has nothing to do with punk or anything, Era de Oro. This band has been playing for so many years. But they put out a song recently that I haven't stopped listening to these past three months. It's more of a danceable, indie kind of band. And they're so sweet.
Pika: They're so talented and nice.
Dani: *[sings the song, everyone laughs]* We really don't lack talent in Mexico. There are good bands, and good shows. But yeah, it's full of assholes. So what we need is for these assholes, who are basically shitty heterosexual dudes, to go fuck themselves. That's what we need. We need to eliminate those gross dudes.
Pika: There's so many talented people doing great things all over the country.
Dani: We even forgot about Guadalajara! Guadalajara has Vontade, although the singer is from Brazil. That band is amazing too.

MRR: You guys were recently touring the West Coast of the US with Cremalleras. Tell me a little about your experience there...
Dani: *[laughter]* You were there! You could write about it yourself.

MRR: *[laughter]* I was with you! But this is a genuine question, I really want to know what you guys think, do you believe the punk community there is different?
Dani: Totally. Totally.
Pika: Yes, definitely.
Dani: It's so weird, not only in the US, it was different in every city we played at. None of them were bad, every show we played was really great and we felt so supported, but it was definitely a very different scene.
Pika: It depended a lot on the city. The tendency I saw was, the smaller the city, the crazier people got. The bigger the city, the quieter people were. So when we went to Chico, I mean, Chico was the best show for me, it was insane! People were so young, and jumping around doing crazy shit.
Dani: It is really a different scene from Mexico. To begin with, you can really see there's a big queer movement in the US, you see a lot of trans, non-binary, gay and lesbian people, and you don't see that in Mexico at shows. There's no queer movement in Mexico, you know that. It's non-existent. And being there at any show we saw at least five people we could feel identified with, and that made me feel great. Although in general, I don't particularly love playing in the US because it's kind of shitty, due to so many things.

MRR: Like what?
Dani: Like the fucking process of crossing the border, not being able to cross with instruments, the fact that they make you feel like a fucking criminal, having to hide things. All of that shit is uncomfortable, exhausting, it just makes you feel bad, you're putting yourself at a horrible risk. And you're not even doing anything wrong. And when bands come here, they don't have to go through that. But when you go there you have to make a real thorough plan, you gotta know what to say, it's awful.

MRR: Do you think the way they organize shows and stuff there is also different?
Dani: Ooof, I got so much to say about this! [laughter] I think it's fucking stupid, we in Mexico make shows from the bottom of our hearts, we often don't make a single peso out of it, sometimes we lose money, but we don't care, we just want to make things happen here, we just want to keep it going. And our instruments and stuff here can be used by anyone, anyone who comes is welcome to use them. And we all lend each other everything, 'cause we're a fucking community. When you go to shows in the US, they even change the fucking bass drum, they change every fucking instrument, it's a fucking waste of time and it's so rude, especially when Latinx bands go. Of course all the gringo bands are like "Yeah we gotta support the Latinx bands..."
Samara: And then they want to make you go rent instruments.
Dani: And they go on and on about minorities, and they don't really support you. They're so stuck up about lending you instruments or whatever. But when they tour Mexico with their bands, everyone gives them whatever they need, nobody says anything to them, there's no problem at all. Even though they could cross with their own instruments, because they don't have a problem coming to Mexico from the US. But from Mexico to the US, it's a huge deal. And I want this to be known. You can't cross with instruments, and people don't get it, they think you don't do it because you're stupid

or lazy, and it's not that, you just can't.
Samara: Also, our money is worth shit, we can't go rent instruments.
Dani: They want to make you go rent instruments! Our money is nothing there. This is something so important that really irritates me about playing in the US.
Pika: It's been a drag, but also there's always someone at every show or tour who really fucking supports us big time.
Dani: That's true. Certain people's attitudes do not represent everybody, because there's always a good person everywhere who knows how things work and who has helped us and allowed us to move forward. Hi, Jessica! I want to say hi to her.
Samara: We've been lucky, I don't know what we could have done without those people.
Pika: Without Jessica and MaryJo, the tour we had in Texas and the one on the West Coast couldn't have happened. We've seen both sides of the story, we've been treated really badly but also so great. Unexpectedly well. We were treated really bad in Austin, it wasn't cool.
Dani: Austin was awful in that sense.
Pika: And we had that experience in Austin, but in McAllen and San Antonio we had a great time. Austin was awful. And then we went to the West Coast, when we got robbed and our van had their windows smashed and they stole all of our shit, we were amazed at all the support we received from people there. Grace Ambrose and Ben Paulsen, oh my god, and Shawnecee! They're amazing people.
Dani: They are beautiful. They really supported us.
Pika: Anthony in Seattle too!
Dani: I really want to stress how bad Austin was.
Pika: Although the people from Obedience there were great.

MRR: Have these experiences you've gone through playing in the US made you think you want to do things here differently somehow?
Dani: I organize a lot of punk shows with bands from abroad here, along with Pako. Sometimes with Heterofobia. The only thing I'm left thinking is: I'm never going to do the shit they did to me.
Pika: Exactly.
Dani: That's it. I'll never do the same. Because I felt awful, and alone, and I felt really unwanted. If they ever need a fucking drumstick, the whole fucking drumset, amps, a place to sleep, whatever they need, I'll get it for them. I don't care.

MRR: I think maybe that's the general attitude a lot of bands and organizers in Mexico have with bands from abroad...
Dani: Yeah, we are people who treat bands well.
Pika: We know when a band from another country comes here, we will always treat them the way they deserve. They'll always have what they need.

MRR: That's a good thing about touring Mexico, I guess.
Dani: Yes. I mean, I gotta say, in Mexico you're never going to earn money. You can't get upset because you lost money. Your money in the US is worth double. But here, you know you'll have shows where people are going to treat you well, they'll wholeheartedly enjoy your shows, you'll get to see cool places and everyone at your show will be supporting you. And when your set is over, people go to you and want to talk to you and hang out. You see people who are really poor at shows sometimes, but they do whatever they can to be there and support. It's a very different experience.
Samara: Any band that wants to tour Mexico has got it so easy for them. I think it's much more intense here. So it's kind of priceless.
Pika: Like this year, the Total Descontrol fest was insane. I saw people from all over the world. I wanted to remember their faces forever 'cause a lot of them looked like they were really freaking out. People were smashing glass bottles, it all smelled like glue, there were people totally wasted. It was amazing.

MRR: What's next for Heterofobia?
Dani: We want to record our new songs. We want to go to other places, not necessarily the US.
Samara: Latin America.
Dani: Latin America specifically. We're tired of crossing the border like criminals in the US. We want to see new places and be with people who understand our language.

MRR: Anything else you want to add?
Dani: We love Castaño so much. We missed his presence tonight. He couldn't be here because of things that none of us anticipated. He knows we speak for him and he's an essential part of the band, we love him, and we wouldn't be what we are without him.
Pika: I wanna say fuck you to the people who have mistreated us, and also a big thank you to all the beautiful amazing people who have really been there for us. Thanks for letting us be with you.
Dani: Thanks to everyone who supported us when we were there. Who donated when we were robbed and housed us. Fuck the people who say they support the Latino minorities when they don't really know what's going on.
Samara: Fucking idiots who think they're doing something for Latinos because they love Selena.

heterofobiamx.bandcamp.com

VITAL IDLES

Interview and introduction by David Röder. Photos provided by Upset The Rhythm!, Edwin Stevens, Comfortable on a Tightrope, and the band.

VITAL IDLES ARE A FOUR-PIECE FROM GLASGOW, consisting of Jessica Higgins (vocals) , Nick Lynch (guitar and now bass), Ruari McLean (bass and now guitar), and Matthew Walkerdine (drums). They formed in 2015 and quickly released two cassettes of demos (titled, in good old Led Zep fashion, Demos 1 *and* Demos 2*), oscillating between angular post-punk bangers and minimal pop moments. A 7" followed in 2016 via Not Unloved Records, purposefully cementing aforementioned musical parameters whilst allowing a slightly more focused process of production and composition. This process continued with last year's excellent debut LP Left Hand (via Upset the Rhythm), to be followed by a brand new 7" EP this March, which most reasonable people are genuinely excited for. How could you not love a band that's punk enough to be played on the Henry Rollins show but sweet enough to trigger Scotland's Nr. 1 Twee Blogger (Brogues of Not Unloved Records) to start a label? Exactly! We talked to Vital Idles last December in MacLean's living room.*

MRR: Did you have a certain sound or aesthetic in mind when you started out as a band? If I remember it right, it was supposed to be a punk kind of thing?

Ruari: The original plan was that we were all gonna swap instruments for different songs...maybe something like Finally Punk. That would be the kind of band that's not technical, but it's fun, and everyone swaps around. I don't remember having the notion of being a punk band, but it was definitely about something that's very basic, like the Urinals, maybe Desperate Bicycles. We were talking about a Messthetics kind of band, something quite rudimentary.

Nick: To be honest, I thought in the very beginning we were going to be more of a hardcore band or play all fast songs, but I'm glad we've been able to do a bit of everything, and I think that reflects more what we're all into.

MRR: Speaking about what you're into—and to get the weary comparisons out the way—there are a few references that keep coming up in writings about your band, namely early, female-led European post-punk (Raincoats, Kleenex, Petticoats), the omnipresent New Zealand / Flying Nun Pop sound (the Clean, Look Blue Go Purple et. al.) or some examples of the current Australian punk / indie scene like UV Race, Terry, Primo!...or

even Drinks, who are actually not that much of a punk band I guess. Also the aforementioned Messthetics DIY sound. However, if it was up to you, how would you like to define your musical context? Which reference act would you pick, ideally one contemporary and one "vintage" each?

Ruari: If I was gonna name an older band, I think there's some first wave punk stuff I could relate to, like Buzzcocks or Victims, something that has hooks. I hear these Raincoats references, but I don't think I necessarily hear it. Maybe that album has songs on it that are a bit more in that vein. Yeah, maybe bands like that. I'm not saying that we're a punk band as in "we're a hardcore band," because we're obviously not, but I think there's not that much of a leap, we're just doing it with less stuff and a less aggressive approach. Like that band Constant Mongrel, I think there's some similar bits, we maybe do a different version of it, but it doesn't seem a million miles away—but they sound massive, we don't sound massive at all.

MRR: So we've got Buzzcocks and Constant Mongrel for Ruari...

Nick: I'll go for the Urinals as an old band, and for Tyvek as a contemporary one.

Matthew: I've only read it a couple times, but I like the Drinks reference. I think it's a good one.

Ruari: I don't think we're as clever as that. *[laughter]*

Matthew: No, I mean, the first Drinks record...certain songs of the first Drinks record, the more straightforward ones. *[pause]*

Ruari: The La's? *[laughter]*

[Matthew is known as an avid collector and distributor of the La's demos and ephemera, to a point where his self-published the La's fanzines became heavily discussed on associated online message boards.]

Matthew: Well, I mean the La's, yeah, no, I mean there's things in there like, demos, that are like so straightforward and simple, and that's also what we're going for...I think the Australia reference is always good, there's tons of Australian pop and twee music that I still listen to relentlessly.

Ruari: The Avalanches?

Matthew: Are the Avalanches Australian?

MRR: Of course they are! And to stick with Australia, I was listening to Terry recently, who also cover quite a range of genres and styles in their records. There are quite twee sounding songs sitting alongside really angular and short punk songs, which is something you did in your demo cassettes as well, where you get a sing along like "A Morning Serenade" next to a Negative Approach cover. I feel like that changed a bit with your album, it seems like you put more effort into streamlining it into a coherent whole, which I think works really well.

Ruari: I hear it quite differently...

Matt: I think I'm gonna stand with Ruari on this—I think the record has masses of variation.

Jessica: I think that some of the songs on the demos, like that song "A Morning Serenade," are experiments. It's almost like you could see the demos as some kind of adolescence or something, where you're working something out by just trying and presenting and making public and performing a variety of different things. It's not like *"Oh, let's write a country song!"*—it's just what we felt like doing.

Matt: Also, the record was the first attempt at editing anything. The tapes have *everything* we ever did on them.

Jessica: No holding back, like, *access all areas!* I think on the record it might seem more streamlined in relation to the playing around with things we did on the demos, but it's still varied, just with more of a chance to edit things and time to think about what we want on the album, so I guess it's more of a mature thing if you wanna stick with the idea of a maturation process. I feel like we were still retaining a sense of experimentation and an interest in a variety of different modes, but maybe modes that would sit more comfortably next to each other and something that we could buy into as adults and not just say "Oh, this was a fun thing that we did."

MRR: That makes sense, and I do agree there is quite a bit of variation on the album indeed, it's just a lot more coherent in its overall impression, which as I said before I mean as a compliment. But let's talk a bit about what's going on outside the recordings—obviously you guys are not living off your music, you all have other professions you pursue part- / full-time. I was curious about what impact your "work" has on your music, be it in attitude towards things or actually in regards to the actual songwriting. I think it's easier to do this one-on-one so I will start off with Ruari—you are a lawyer, right?

Ruari: Well, first, I'm not working as a lawyer... *[laughter]* I think of them as quite separate I suppose. I have two jobs, but usually when people ask me what I'm doing I say I work for an advocacy organization, which is what I do half the week. I mean, without wanting to get really boring, the advocacy stuff is about wanting to do work that I find fulfilling...

MRR: That's not boring at all!

Ruari: OK—so doing that satisfies that desire to work with people, and hopefully providing some sort of assistance with the way they go about their lives in some small way. And then I do freelance writing stuff so I can do music alongside that and the advocacy work, if that makes sense. I don't think they link up too much to me—it's like, I want to be able to do something that allows me to pay the bills and also satisfies the need to be helpful in some way, but I see that as two separate parts.

MRR: So it's not like what happens at work, maybe something frustrating, is channeled into your playing or something? Let's say

you work on a case you're quite invested in and you get this sense of *"these people are getting fucked over!"* and then you try and riff it out or something?
Ruari: I guess that lots of people make stuff that's a reflection of their views, especially people that tend to sing or write lyrics...but I don't, I've never done that, I see them as quite separate. The only thing is that when I work at home, I have the opportunity to work on some music when taking a break, I don't know if that's really a good answer...

MRR: I think that is a really good answer. At the end of the day, you know, with interviews there are only so many people who can relate to specific questions about the songwriting process and such, whilst pretty much everyone can relate to the problem of work / life balance.
Ruari: I just see it really pragmatically. I'm trying to have a nice time by doing work stuff I like, and then I'm trying to make stuff because that I find interesting. So I'm doing work in a way that makes it possible to have free time to go and use productively—which is not very glamorous, but I guess that's why I decided not to become a lawyer.

MRR: Very glamorous, I think! Nick, how do you think your work as a painter / poet / artist plays into the music you create? Do you see them as separate entities? Do they influence each other or overlap at all?
Nick: For me, they definitely influence each other, or at the very least are in conversation with one another. I think my work as a visual artist is based in repetition, aggregation, and utilizing various materials and ideas. And in the band—my playing style within it and the band's gist in general—we apply all of those devices. I guess in a broader sense I feel like the initial wanting to play in a band is very parallel to wanting to try sculpture, for instance, or experimenting with oil paints rather than acrylics, and so on... they're all based in curiosity and an interest in making.

MRR: A crucial interest indeed. Matthew, you work as a graphic designer and lecturer for visual communication. Knowing you for a good while, I feel like your visual work has moved into a lot of new directions, from a rather minimal, "DIY-looking" approach to more sophisticated layouts and ideas. But then there was also the time you did the toothpaste labels, right?
Matthew: May I stop you there? I've never done packaging for toothpaste.

MRR: You haven't?
Matthew: No, it was for...

MRR: A drill?
Matthew: I did do a drill. But also the Kandoo Frog.
Jessica: The well known potty wipe.
Ruari: It's a wipe for babies.
Jessica: And you did an air freshener!
Matthew: Yes, I did an air freshener, which I heard going off today in the Laurieston (Glasgow pub) toilet.

MRR: Wait...it's called the "can do" frog?
Matthew: "You can do it too with Kandoo!"

MRR: Anyway...do you feel your development in visual expression is related to your music at all, or would you see it as rather separate, like Ruari?
Matthew: In a more abstract sense, possibly yeah. I think you develop a fluency, an ease of doing things. I've become more at ease playing drums over the last few years and the same can be said for setting type. The more you do it the more you are at ease doing it, the more able you feel to insert weird parts and things like that. From a lecturer's perspective—I do and I don't know what Ruari and Nick are talking about when it comes to guitar chat, and recording stuff is particularly foreign to me, but having to understand and reason things that didn't come from you is definitely a skill. I speak to illustrators all the time, and I'm not an illustrator myself. Having to understand visual languages is exactly the same as having to understand musical languages to a certain extent. I think being able to discuss that and understand it and ask questions—and being comfortable asking questions is definitely a thing. Also I would have thought the same about the other guys in the band, I think we're pretty at ease talking to each other, and as maybe an okay lecturer, or I'd like to think a good lecturer, that I'm fairly happy to go "What you on about?" or "What's that again?" Understanding things that don't necessarily come from me is a skill I've had to build up. So, developing a light skill set with a small amount of drums—using them to their whole—is one thing, and then understanding a different kind of language is another.

MRR: Let's move on to Jessica, singer and lyricist of Vital Idles but also performance artist, sculptor, writer extraordinaire. Your debut novel *Guilding* has turned quite a few literary heads. Being familiar with your work, I'm aware that your writing practice outside music is linked to your lyrics one way or the other, but obviously there is also a bit of rift between those approaches. Do you know what text goes where before you start it, or do you just gather text and then put it to what seems to suit best at a time?
Jessica: I think with writing lyrics it's specific to writing lyrics, the words that end up in that particular place. However, before regarding the relationship between some things I do, be it performance or writing or art-art, like, in the art corner, there are always words that I gather via listening, note making or just thinking. One thing that I've sort of felt uncomfortable with but became comfortable with

over the years is that often words or phrases might appear in one place, like my visual art practice, but then they might be recycled in lyrics and vice versa. Because when we're in the practice space and I have to come up with words for a song these words will seem helpful or make a grounding to begin to write a song. Over the time I've felt like that's fine. There might be a perceived rift between being in a band and making art that can be live or on the page or elsewhere, they might seem like two different things, and maybe they kind

of are within the realms they're heard or seen or consumed. However, given that I'm just one person, I think that there's something quite interesting about a map of different utterances that exist in different places. So there's actually less of a rift—even though they can be two different things, and the audience for music might not see my art, and the art audience might just know "she's in a band" but might not see us play or listen to the records.

So even though they're different, it's all from the same place. I used to find it easier to write lyrics when we first started because I don't think I was using as much writing within my art practice, so I had more material. I had more things in my pockets, more words I could bring out. But now that I use words more in other parts of my life, I sometimes find it harder to write words for songs, and also get annoyed with myself because I find that I only write lyrics that relate to what I think about in art if that makes sense. But then it also comes back to worrying that those words exist in other places, but that's fine, because they're all just words that are coming out of the same person.

MRR: Still, with your writing in books and for performances, I feel like there's more of a narrative side to it, whilst it seems with the lyrics that part is largely absent or maybe even deliberately removed? Are you intentionally trying to sidestep storytelling or is that something that just happens when you put your words to the music?

Jessica: I think it's necessary to the singing or the sound or orating—it's the difference of writing to be read or writing to be told...even just the difference between writing and speaking. If you're writing something to be read or read aloud that's meant to explicitly be said, there needs to be a different tone or rhythm. Whilst writing lyrics allows it to be more fractured, because there's the rhythm of the song already, so it's not practical to have a really long phrase that would get interrupted if Matt hits the cymbal or the guitar comes in. There's limited structures within which to play. Actually, the process of writing, at least for me, almost always is the same where it starts with a collage of phrases, which then get fleshed out according to the circumstances under which they will be made public, so if it's for a little publication or a performance it might be necessary to start and weave a narrative from those images or fragments. I guess, for lack of a better term, a song can actually remain quite raw in terms of the phrases that go in and how they sit together, and also you have to think about repetition because it's obviously about melody and rhythm and not just about a story. But I guess even within writing a song that might end up as being more fragmented, if you were to read the words as a series of phrases that go from one to the next...when it comes down to the decision of editing that, it might not make sense to anybody else, but it needs to be something I'm happy with. There may be a narrative in mind, or a feeling or a thought or a wider narrative that is not necessarily embedded in words but that helps to make a logical connection.

MRR: That makes sense, and I think you are doing really well with using your words in a way that suits their specific mode of presentation and medium. Speaking of medium—besides your jobs, three of you are also involved with Good Press, a non-profit project space and artists' book shop in Glasgow that supports independent publishers and community-oriented facilitation. What is your aim with Good Press, and how did it become the place it is today?

Matthew: We are constantly saying that it's the space to go to if you've got nowhere else to go to. *[laughter]* Or not even, it should be held higher than that, I'd hope it's held higher than that...I got myself in a funny position there.

Jessica: I think the point of us mentioning it in press releases is for people who are not familiar with it being like "oh, what is it?"—and then it's quite easy to find out that it's an artists' book shop, and a space...I guess the impetus is that it's a space-making exercise for independent publications. It's a thing that bleeds into various different areas of our lives, including music, a place where certain material gets to live if it's not mainstream.

Matthew: It's open submission, so anyone can sell their book there...

Jessica: ...or cassette tape...

Matthew: Or cassette tape, or whatever is going, and I would hope in the same sense that anyone would think that musically, like "Oh, I can play drums, even if it's just one drum." We can all do it in our own way, and the point of Good Press is that you can see the whole range. The impetus is—it's all there, let's see it all and let's hope in encourages people to make. The whole hope of Good Press is that it encourages other people to say "Well, there's something really plush, I wanna make something like that," or "There's something that's two sheets of paper folded in half—I can do that!"

Jessica: Yeah, the idea that anyone can make anything—like, you could play music with one drum, or whatever you have at your disposal, and there's a place for that. But also a place where your activity doesn't exist in a vacuum, you can see that somebody else is doing something in a way that's not a learned and professionalized thing. Or, if you wanna make something really plush, that's also there, and it's like "Oh look, somebody else is doing that, I'm interested in that, I wanna be able to touch it or be able to get it and I also know that it's got some kind of audience."

Matthew: I guess the point is that there's no hierarchy in Good Press—there's the fourteen-year-old kid who comes in on his birthday every single year alongside the out-of-towner who wants to know about art. It's about everyone being on a level and enjoying the fact that they've been intrigued by something or are interested in something. It does fold into being mainly visual art and art writing because of our backgrounds and what Glasgow's landscape is like at the moment. But we are getting more and more tapes—so many tapes! It's all ambient and electronic music! They're not people you know, though, just guys in their bedrooms scouring the internet finding someone that makes sound landscapes. But it's amazing, they are recording these things from time to time and there's somewhere for them to put it. It's either their bandcamp or it's Good Press, and I think that's really important.

Jessica: People make stuff every day, be it music or art stuff, and it's not unique because everybody does it, but it's also not exclusive...but, you know, it's nice to just...

Ruari: I guess it is similar to us making tapes as a band—a finite thing, a possibility to conclude a process by recording it and presenting it.

Jessica: It's a good excuse to follow an idea through.

Nick: I think in a way DIY art and music are really just two sides of the same coin. There's the notion of wanting to make something and then executing that idea, that's the same whether you're talking about art, music, home construction, surfing, cooking, anything...I've always liked the idea of working within your means; what can you do with what you've got? I think that concept is essential in every DIY endeavor, including both our band and Good Press.

MRR: All hail Good Press! Seems like you are not too far off from what *MRR* is doing with its demo section and participation call outs, which is always a good thing in my opinion. There's just so many people out there making and releasing stuff that deserve a bit of a platform. Speaking of releasing—you have an EP coming out on Upset the Rhythm this March (the 1st to be exact), and I feel like there is a bit of a shift towards a dryer, sparser, and bleaker sound, with the lyrics seeming more dystopian as well. I feel like I can even hear a bit of Jess's channeling a bit of Ian Curtis, whilst before there was more of a Morrisseyan twist. Do you agree? And if so, was that a conscious decision to get a bit gloomier in comparison to the stuff you released before?

Ruari: I can't say about the lyrics, but someone said something very similar after the last time we played live. As you know, for the last songs we wrote for the album, I started playing guitar and Nick's playing bass. I think when I play bass maybe I am filling in space quite a lot, and now that that's reversed maybe I'm less inclined to fill in space and by doing that I also get less melodic. On the guitar you get more tonal scope, so it's much easier to play less and leave more space and use—let's say more discordant half chords, something more atonal or wonky—whilst before Nick was playing a lot of major chords and I was just adding melodic bass lines. I feel like that's a shift that might explain some of the musical changes—the stuff we wrote towards the end of the record was already going in that sort of direction. I've certainly tried to find a more coherent idea of what I'm doing.

Jessica: I think for the singing, if the tone of the music changes then that dryness or sparsity, as you put it, is a specific tone to play within. In terms of content of the lyrics—I wouldn't see them as more dystopian. I think there were some more dystopian themes, if you wanna use that term, on the last record, in a more blunt way, whereas here a lot of them really just have to do with the question of "But what do I have to say?" I was thinking about a sense of "undoing," which is a word I used in one of the lyrics, thoughts about communicating or even just about being in the world.

MRR: I see. Still, from reading the lyrics I get this feeling of dysfunction, like communication failing, maybe one's body also failing? I mean, we do live in bleak times, maybe you were reflecting that too?

Jessica: It's true, and it's been said over and over again, we do live in very tense times. However, I don't think any of the words that I used in these songs deal with those tensions explicitly, but I think there's an element of that tension within them. Maybe language or communication failing, and bodies—not necessarily in a health sense—failing—but body pressure, stress, feelings of stress that are enacted upon us or through us every single day. Maybe they weave their way into the lyric writing as well.

Vital Idles will be on tour in Europe in support of their new 7".

March 20: Brighton, UK @ East Street Tap
March 21: Paris, FR @ Le Zorba
March 22: Brussels, BE @ Super Fourchette
March 23: Rotterdam, NL @ Roodkapje
March 24: Amsterdam, NL @ Butcher's Tears
March 25: Antwerp, BE @ Cabron
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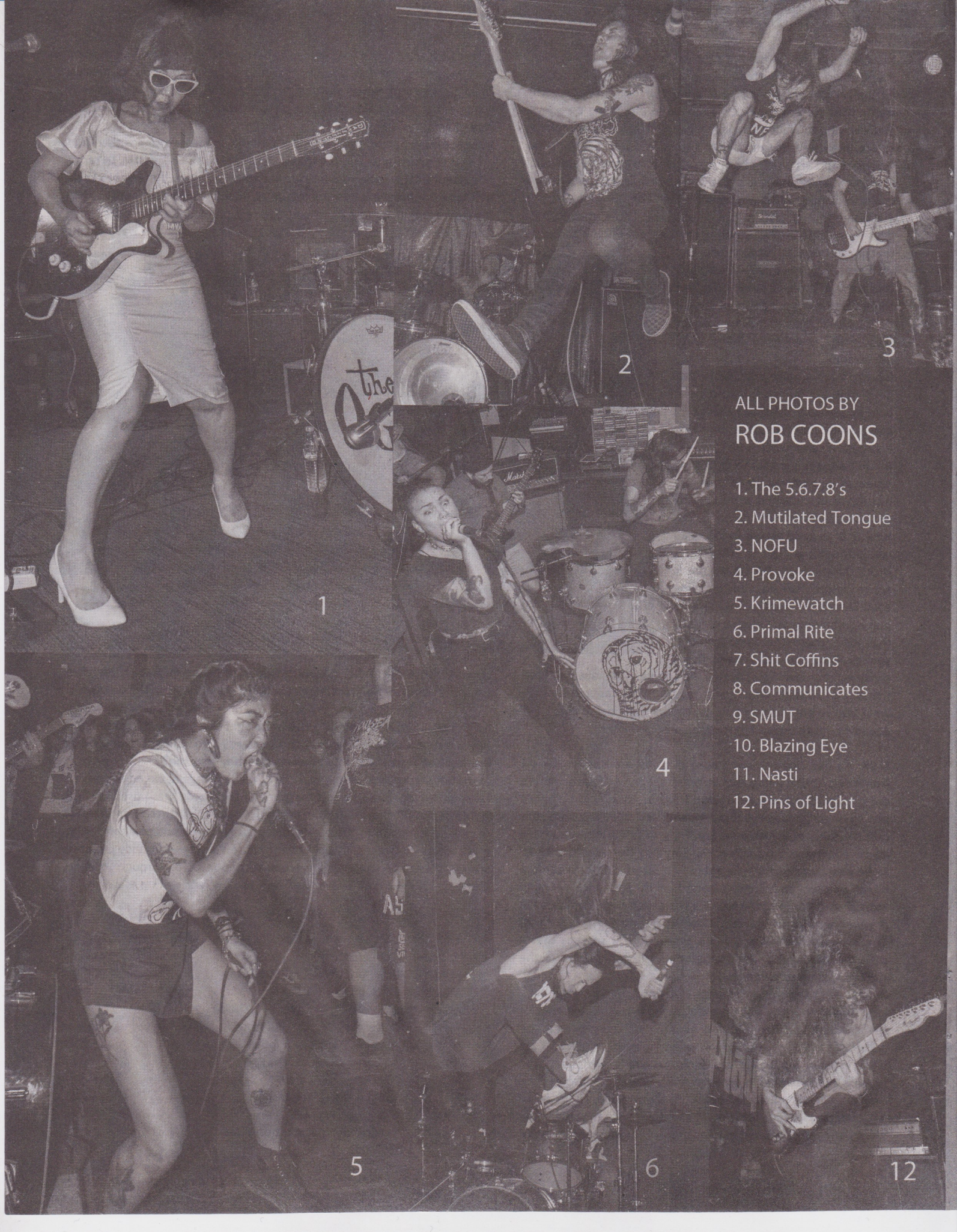
March 28: Glasgow, UK @ CCA
March 30: Salford, UK @ The White Hotel



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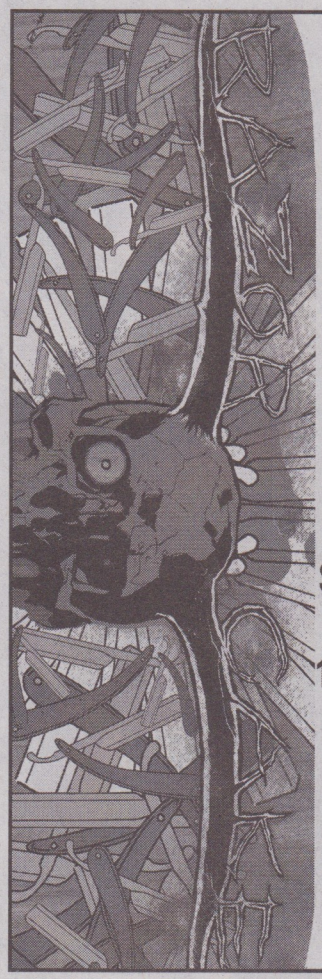

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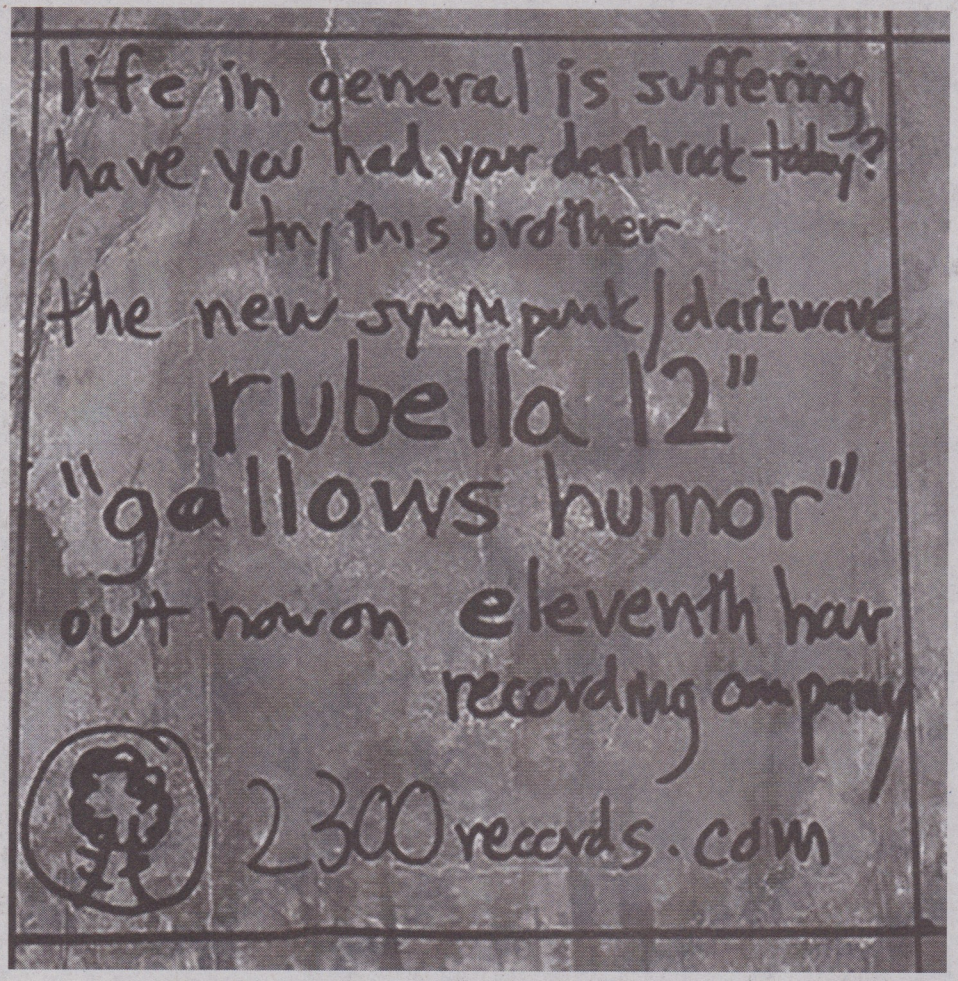

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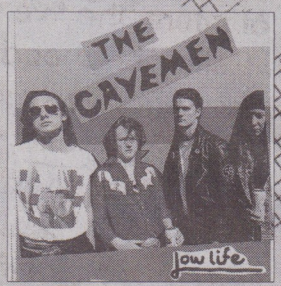

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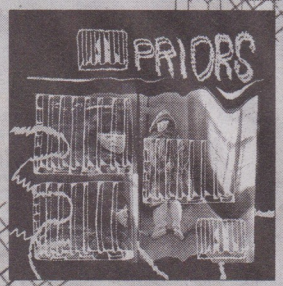

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PERRA VIDA

Peruvian punks Perra Vida were born in the inaugural moments of 2018. Amazingly, their ripping self-titled EP was committed to wax and dropped only half a year later. It's fitting I was able to catch up with Lima's most ardently outspoken group as on the eve of being together for a year. Comprised of Diana Matos (voz / vocals), Noelia Cabrera (bajo / bass), Alejandro Delgado (guitarra / guitar), and José Diez Canseco (bateria / drums), the mere existence of a fiercely political hardcore band with female representation in Peru is at least surprising and, at most, revolutionary. According to the band, there's barely a female presence in their local scene, save a killer sXe group from Lima. Peru is currently facing a disproportionately high amount of femicide. Perilously or not, Perra Vida represents the push back, the brick, the fierce punk spirit that demands action. Their mere existence an indictment of all forms of abuse and violence, be it domestic, street-based, or gendered. They willingly take on all comers with music and a message, both blazing and uncompromising.

Interview by Adam Yoe
Photographs provided by Charlotte Beja
Artwork by Tania Brun

Musically, Perra Vida's first offering is an all-too-brief blur of hardcore punk that manages to pull from early USHC, riot grrrl, and a litany of Peruvian Rock Subterraneo bands. Done to a dizzyingly high standard, at times it deftly teeters on the edge of falling apart. As a statement of intent, the five tracks are a master class in pissed off, straight-ahead punk, as confrontational as it is catchy. Perra Vida manage to marry whip-smart lyricism with mid-paced stomp, and seething fury with breakdowns that sidestep the goonery of NYHC's chest-beating. The scattershot edge injects a sense of danger that, ultimately, is a reflection of daily life in Lima. Standout track "Acoso," their fiery aural assault on the patriarchy, is an absolutely killer slab of driving punk that expertly pairs Diana's scathing treatises with a blown out, bass driven sound. Multicultural in its approach and execution, there are touches of Pilsen legends as well as first wave Orange County hardcore, talking breakdowns and all. Make way...

MRR: If I did my homework, it'd seem that you're still a relatively new band. What was 2018 like for the band?

Jose: It's been great so far. We are not even a year in, but we got to release an EP, play some really cool shows in our hometown, and be featured and reviewed on some pretty cool sites and zines. There is still a lot to do for us, but this year has been pretty kind to us as a band. The plan for 2019 is to keep getting tighter and better and to play outside of Peru.

Alejandro: Yeah, it has been a good year for sure. When Jose and I originally got together to jam these punk songs we had, we really didn't know how to play our instruments that well, but we just decided to practice and work hard, and now we are seeing somewhat of a result to our hard work. The highlight of 2018 was that we released the EP on tape with Peruvian label Circle One and are going to be releasing a 7" with En Tu Kara Records from California in 2019.

MRR: There's a storied history of punk in Peru. As the home to 1960s proto-punks Los Saicos, many consider it to be the birthplace of punk. The 1980s saw the rise of Narcosis, among myriad other Peruvian subterraneo bands. How do you feel as though Perra Vida fits into the larger narrative of punk rock?

Jose: We just humbly keep it going. Peru has had some great bands throughout the decades, and we are influenced by a lot of them in one way or another. We are not trying to discover or bring anything that has not been done to the table, we just play what we like and give the message that we want, and hope to make a difference in some way. Right now there's a bunch of fucked up shit going on in our country, and we have lots to sing about.

Alejandro: We all listen to punk rock all day everyday. Here in Peru we don't really give a fuck who is punk or what is punk, we don't really have that big of a scene so we really can't afford to be fighting or arguing with other local punk bands. We respect other bands and we try to do our own thing, but we could care less who doesn't like it or doesn't support it. We keep moving forward.

MRR: When and where did you all first encounter punk, both as music and a subculture? What were some of your formative records? Do you remember your first show?

Jose: I grew up in Raleigh, NC, so my first punk show was some high school punk show in some bumfuck town. Here in Lima, punk rock is completely different, though. You could see stray dogs hanging around the shows or somebody passed out in the bathroom, and no one gives a fuck. There's no cops or anything bugging you all the time.

Diana: I first encountered it in Arequipa, Peru, both as a music and subculture. I remember the band los Flechados a lot, and Aeropajita's Kepoka de Mierda record.

Noelia: My first encounter was with punk shows in Cusco, my city of origin. But one of the moments that I remember the most was going randomly to the presentation of a photography book about the Peruvian punk scene called Un Lugar when I was seventeen. It was done by one the most known photographers of our scene, "El Avión" Garcia. I remember looking at the photos and wanting to be part of that lifestyle and that culture.

Alejandro: Mom used to be into Ramones and Blondie. Don't know how punk that is, but that's the first thing I remember.

MRR: In that Perra Vida is inherently political, has there been any blowback from your immediate scene or community? In the grand tradition of oppositional culture, Perra Vida seems to stand for resistance, social critique, and empowerment. Was the intention always to be confrontational or did it develop out of necessity?

Diana: Corruption, femicide, human trafficking, drug trafficking, illegal mining, and contamination are everyday problems in our country. The media is bought and doesn't tell you much, or they just hide it. The citizens know what's going on, but I don't understand why no one wants to talk about it openly. If someone has to do it, I would volunteer. For me it is a necessity, it's human to do it. But on the other hand, not everything has to be dark or negative, and we don't have to think that all is lost. We have to do something and be strong and know that change is within each one of us; we have to empower ourselves and be better as people and community. If one of our songs produces some sort of change for somebody, then that's everything to me.

Noelia: Society always criticizes the ones who, in a certain way, look to make a change, whether it's because they like to remain within their comfort zone or for resisting to change because of feeling threatened. There is a saying in Peru, "the worst enemy of a Peruvian is another Peruvian" because we have a very negative culture that attacks whoever succeeds. Just like there have been people that have cheered us on, there have also been people that make an effort to criticize and attack us.

But there is another Spanish saying: "if the dogs are barking it means you are moving forward."

MRR: Among other things, the eponymous EP addresses heady topics like rape culture and street harassment. In my relatively limited knowledge, I'm sadly aware of Lima's status as one of the world's most dangerous city for women in the world. For a band whose name translates directly as "Bitch Life," has it brought any attention to pressing problems in the area?

Diana: Like you mentioned, Peru is a misogynist country. There is abuse reported daily. So far this year [2018] there have been 134 femicides. The community is protesting more each time and actually talking about it. Before, they would just blame the victim for being "exposed to a dangerous situation."

The band name comes from a phrase by the ex-president of Peru, Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, as he referred to his campaign opponent Veronica Mendoza as "the red one who hasn't done anything in her bitch life."

This shows that the misogynist culture of this country is so evident that even the ex-president is part of it.

Alejandro: We are not a banda feminista. We do support the struggle that not only women have to endure in Peru, but also all minorities, the poor, and the forgotten.

MRR: What's the infrastructure like for the punk scene in Lima? (Venues / record stores / labels, etc.) What other bands are you all involved in? What other bands in Lima should we be aware of? In Peru in general?

Jose: Everything in Lima is pretty small compared to other big cities in Latin America. We don't have much of a "scene" or places to play. There's not much support, and bands kind of do their own thing in the underground. There's a few places and a bunch of bands keeping it alive, though.

Noelia: It is difficult to be an underground artist in Peru. Economic support from labels is almost zero, and people who set up shows are very difficult when it comes to paying the price you put on your work. A lot of these people don't realize that being in a band, it's not just time, but it's also money that you're already resigned to not recovering in its entirety. However, none of this matters when you are up on stage seeing people sweating and singing your lyrics, which have a sense of protest. Peruvian underground artists have made DIY culture their own and we all do it for ourselves and for love of music.

As far as other bands we play in: Diana plays in Alias La Gringa from Arequipa, Noelia plays in Blue Velvet and Kusama, Jose and Alejandro play in Venganza and Reducidos.

MRR: What're some of your favorite releases of 2018? Of all time?

Jose: For 2018, I have been jamming on Deseos Primitivos, Tozcos, and Chain Cult.

Diana: Asmereir single and Tóxica EP.

Noelia: Lately I think I'd rather listen to older music than new music. My favorite album of all time is Cocteau Twins, Garlands.

Alejandro: A lot of Tensión, One Head One Tail, and Limp Wrist.

Listen to Perra Vida at perravida.bandcamp.com

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FINK FOR CIA

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Out of all the punk bands constantly cropping up in Los Angeles, the C.I.A. may be the loudest in recent memory. With two cranked up bass rigs pounding behind lead singer Denée Segall's charged and angry vocals, the C.I.A. offers the listener little remorse in a live setting as well as on record. If you're having trouble digesting food, their double bass attack will set your innards straight. I caught up with Deneé to learn more about the band's debut album, their formation, which wig works when, and more.
Interview and introduction by Benny Carter. Photos provided by James Sakert and Marcos Manrique.

MRR: You play in Los Angeles band Lamps and in the now inactive VIAL, but this is your first time fronting a band. What freedom have you found behind the microphone that's different from playing an instrument in a punk band?
Denée Segall: Fronting a band is a completely different experience for me. I'm very comfortable playing bass and I love the anonymity of it. All you have to do is lurk in the shadows and hold it down. It's the perfect position for a shy gal like myself. Being a front woman is not as easy. I used to dread public speaking. So much so that back in the third grade, the first time I had to give an oral presentation, I lost it. I was so paralyzed with fear that I convinced the teacher to let me stay in at lunch and record my speech on a camcorder (and to be honest, even that was difficult). So yeah, it was very hard for me to work up the courage to be stripped of an instrument and be judged solely upon my words and my presence. It truly does make you feel naked. But to my delight, the first time I performed in this way I actually really enjoyed it. It gave me a new sense of confidence in my words, my ability, and in myself in general. It is so powerful to try your hand at something that once scared you to death and realize that there was no reason to feel that way in the first place. It feels good to be naked.

MRR: I was at the C.I.A's first show, in a friend's living room. How has the band changed since then? You've released an LP and a tape in a pretty short amount of time. You guys work quickly.
At that first show, we performed all but two of the ten songs that are on the album. It really hasn't changed much since then. Like any band, we've become a lot tighter by playing and practicing more. I have become a more confident performer. A change for the better. Emmett and Ty (bass) are so used to playing shows. I don't think nerves were ever much of an issue for them in this band. The tables have turned. Now they get to lurk in the background. I expect a change to come when we start writing again. We've been playing the same set of songs for the past year (I'm realizing it's been almost exactly a year since our first show) and I think we are all ready to explore new territory... whatever that means.

MRR: What's the inspiration for naming the band the C.I.A.? Have suspicious men in black suits shown up to any of your shows?
We'd been playing together for a few months and couldn't come up with anything. I can't even remember another band name we discussed. They were all bad. One day Emmett showed up to practice and threw the name out there and it stuck. It's obviously an intense name, and we are an intense band. It felt fitting. I really enjoy that it can stand for so many different things. It stands for whatever we want it to stand for at any given moment. Plus it's just got a nice ring to it. As to the second part of your question. I'm not worried about any MIB. The only suspicious man in a black suit that comes to our shows is Emmett Kelly himself.

MRR: Can you talk about the black and white theme you've used to present the C.I.A. so far? The artwork for the LP is a striking black and white photo and the demo was black and white; there's also your black and white hair in the "Oblivion" video. How do those colors help present the band's message?

I love black and white because it's so classic and simple. If you didn't know us, you could stumble across the tape or LP and have no idea if it was from the '80s, '90s, or today. I do really love color though. Most of the art I make is very colorful. But this project taps into a different, harsher part of my brain. So maybe that's the reason. Honestly the black and white theme was never discussed, it was never a concept. It just happened. And it's certainly not a hard and fast rule. Example: I've worn a different color wig for every show thus far. There's no telling how things might change as the band evolves.

MRR: What's your favorite place to buy wigs for the live show? Are you allowed to divulge these secrets or is it under wraps?
I'm allowed to but I certainly will not! There are a couple of places that I frequent. However I've bought up most of the wigs I like from my favorite shops at this point. So now I'm searching for new spots and considering shopping online. I have a friend who recently recommended their buddy to me as a wig stylist. This has given me a lot more options. They give my old wigs new life!

MRR: Costumes or "stage clothes" seem to be more acceptable than they have been in the past. I feel like I see a lot more fashion on stage these days than ten years ago when most "punks" just wore jeans and a t-shirt. Then again, I guess L.A. has always been more fashion forward. Who are some punk fashion icons you looked up to or have influenced what you wear on stage? How far is too far with stage clothes? Is there such a thing?
I think it's specific to the project. I would never wear a costume in Lamps (except one time on Halloween when I was Captain Sensible). In VIAL we would always choose a different "theme" for our stage wear. Monochrome, goth prom, even tiki one time (I don't think a lot of the "bro punks" we were playing to enjoyed that one much). Wearing a uniform is a nice way to feel connected with your bandmates. But I've always loved being in costume. It helps me to get out of my head. There are many sides of my personality and I like to express them all. See: "Pleasure Seeker" music video. Those are all of my own clothes. I've held onto the JNCOs and cowboy boots since middle school. As long as you are expressing your true self, you can never go too far. It's easy to tell when someone is faking it. And yes, LA has always had a very diverse fashion scene. I love looking at what the OG punks use to wear. Some of my favorites (from all over, not just LA) are Poly Styrene, Alice Bag, Divine, Wendy O, Vivienne Westwood, Blondie.

james sakert photo

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MRR: What kind of things influenced you to write the lyrics for the song "Sedition?" I specifically think the line "*Leaders turn to liquid, flush em down the toilet*" is pretty sick. How about the lyrics for the song "Harm Joy"?
"Sedition" is definitely the most politically fueled song on the record. It's hard to talk about how fed up I am with our current government. It's a given and it makes me depressed and I'm sick of talking about it. That's kind of why I kept this subject contained to the one song (that and the fact that there are so many other non-political issues that I am just as passionate about). That being said, I now have a public voice in some small way and I feel a responsibility to say something. If I can in any way help to fire up some person to get involved, to vote, to voice their frustration, that would make me very happy.

The inspiration for "Harm Joy" came from one source and then morphed. Original it was John Waters. He is obsessed with the the Manson Family murders. So much so that he was a spectator in the courtroom at a few of the trials and to this day maintains a close relationship with Leslie Van Houten. So it started with John. Then I started thinking about all of the TV shows and documentaries about crime, murders, ect. I thought about how obsessed people become with murder trials on the news, and how many people develop and intense disdain for those on trial from the moment they are accused. There are people that really get off on others' misfortunes. Our society loves to have a villain to hate. I think it's unfortunate that we spend so much time holding others in contempt. If people used that time to think about how to better themselves instead of judging others, we'd be a lot better off.

MRR: How has someone like Nic Endo or Dinah Cancer influenced your work with the C.I.A.?
I gotta be honest, I had never listened to Atari Teenage Riot until Tim mentioned them in the press release. No disrespect, but there was no influence there for me. 45 Grave are legends, but for me they are one of those band where I know the hits, but never dug in super deep. I definitely appreciate them and her voice obviously rules. I was super into Sonic Youth as an adolescent, and Kim Gordon was one of my first influences. I loved that she didn't have a traditionally "good" voice. What she lacked in technique is overpowered by the strength and conviction she exudes. And she isn't afraid to sing about whatever she wants. Free Kitten's *Nice Ass* is one of my favorite records. More than any vocalist, the people who influence me when it comes to the C.I.A. (and in life in general) are those who are unapologetically themselves and don't waste a thought on what other people think about them.

MRR: How do you think the C.I.A. fits into what's happening with underground music in Los Angeles right now? What venues do you guys like to play in LA?
I don't feel like we necessarily fit in with any specific scene happening right now. But then again, I don't go to as many shows as I did a few years ago. So I'm not the most knowledgeable on the current underground scene. I mostly go to friends' shows and we play with friends' bands, as we are lucky to have friends in really good bands—Warm Drag, Flat Worms, P22, just to name a few. As for venues, the best DIY spot in LA

at the moment is the Rec Center. I hope they stick around for a while. The Locker Room in Garden Grove is amazing as well. Honorable mention goes to Shelby's old living room. RIP.

MRR: I've heard about the Locker Room but still never been, what's up with that spot?
It's a small room located behind a large outdoor amphitheater in Garden Grove. It used to be the greenroom for people performing at the amphitheater. A while ago they built a better greenroom and the old one was turned into an all ages DIY venue. The backdrop for the stage is literally a row of lockers. They're covered in stickers by all the bands that have played there in the past. The sound there is good and there's a nice old Elvis themed Mexican restaurant down the street.

MRR: Now that the record has been out for a second is there anything you've realized about the project that you didn't notice before? I feel like a lot of times I find new meaning in lyrics or songs after I let them sit for awhile. Sometimes when it's this concrete thing I feel like a collection of songs takes on a new life of its own compared to when they were songs in a setlist.
Not really. The only song I can see taking on a different meaning than what I had originally intended is "Fear." That song is based on a scene from an old horror movie. The first line is literally ripped right out of the film. That's all I was thinking about when I wrote it. But with all the madness happening in the US at the moment, that song could definitely take on a more sociopolitical context. It could relate to the fear and hate that close-minded individuals feel towards anyone different from themselves.

MRR: The demo tape has that awesome sample at the end of all those different bands saying "The CIA." I thought that was a great idea for a demo. How did that come about? What's the weirdest sample on there?
As you know from listening to the record, our songs aren't very long. After putting five on one side of the demo tape, we still had a whole side left to fill. Ty and I were home late one night and he decided to freestyle with all of those different clips of the Beatles – "Dig It," and also the Fugs – "C.I.A. Man." I liked it and decided we needed to find as many mentions of the C.I.A. in other songs as possible. It was really fun but also extremely time consuming. I think it was worth it though, I like how it turned out. The weirdest one is probably the Red Hot Chili Peppers covering the Ramones. WHY? Actually, that's the worst. The weirdest is the Porky Pig part.

The C.I.A. have a new LP out on In the Red.

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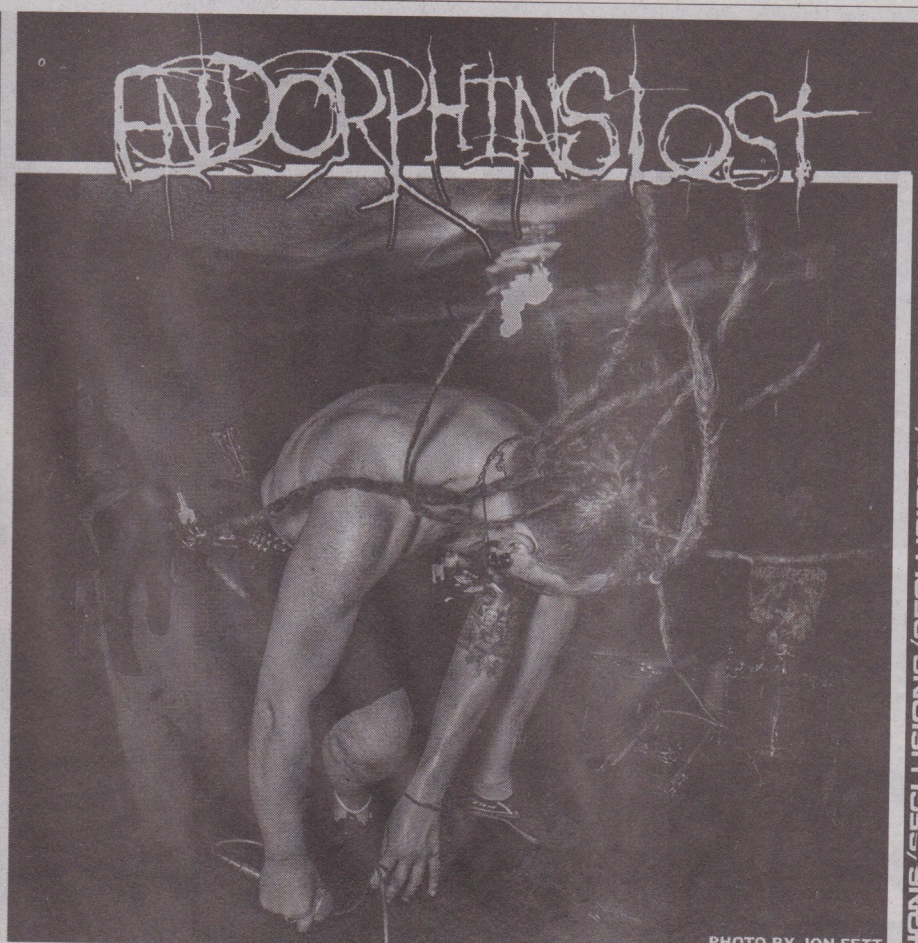

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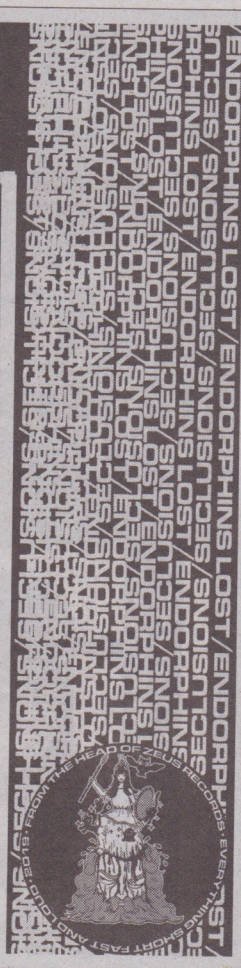

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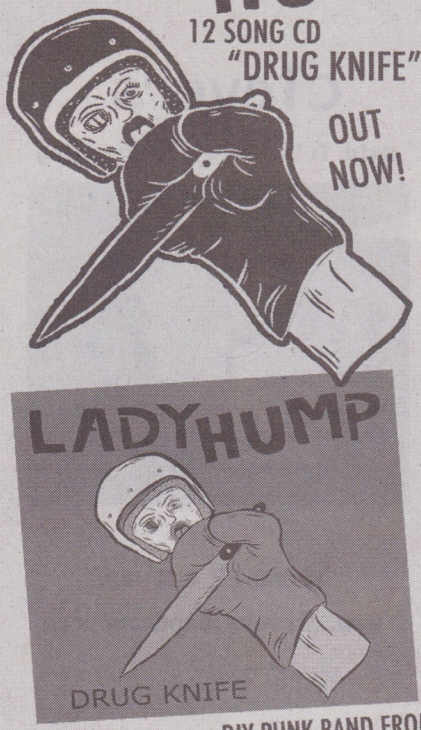

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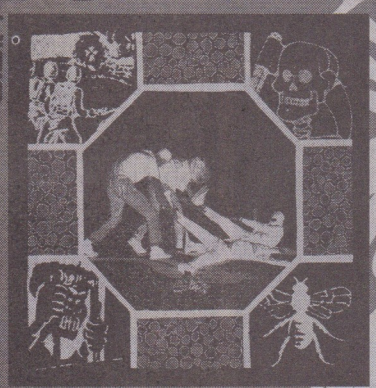

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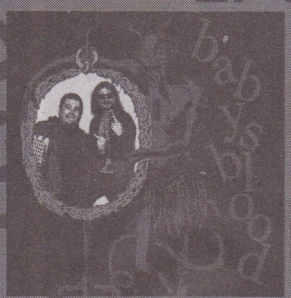

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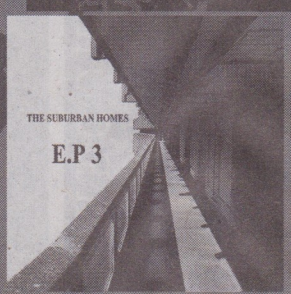

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PORVENIR OSCURO

Porvenir Oscuro is a punk band from NYC that started in mid-2015. They have one demo that came out in 2016, a promo tape in 2017, and an EP that was released summer 2018 on Always Restrictions Records. Sonically, Porvenir Oscuro could be described as traditional Spanish language hardcore punk that incorporates classic elements of Finnish hardcore and Spanish punk à la Ultimo Resorte. They recently finished an extensive West Coast tour in the summer of 2018 and have plans to return to the West Coast, Canada, and other international dates in the coming future.

This interview was recorded and conducted at the Porvenir Oscuro practice space in Brooklyn, NY by Moe Massive and transcribed by Dennis Marcial.

photo: Carlos Garcia, art: Alex Heir

MRR: Where are you guys from?
Dennis: I'm from New Jersey originally, though I moved to NYC from Connecticut after living there for five years.
Gage: I grew up in Florida until I was eighteen. Did a lot of traveling for a couple years then ended up in NYC.
Stevie: I'm from NYC.
Sara: I'm from Medellin, Colombia.

MRR: When did Porvenir Oscuro begin?
Sara: A thousand years ago...I don't know, 2015?
Stevie: Yeah, it was summer 2015 because Sara and I moved back to New York from Colombia. We had this idea for the band for a while, so when I got to New York I asked a few of my friends "Yo, do you wanna play in a band that will sound like this and this??" and it started there.

MRR: So did the concept of Porvenir Oscuro start in Colombia, or previously when you were in America?
Sara: I guess here.
Stevie: Well, the concept, the name and idea, I got while I was living in Colombia. I was working in an office and I was able to listen to music and shit, and I was listening to "Porvenir Oscuro" by Cocadictos, and that's how I got the band name idea, and Sara and I would usually jam together, me playing guitar and her on drums. That wasn't the band per se, but we said that we should start a band and once we got to the U.S. I said "You [Sara] gotta be the singer, the leader of the band, and I want to play bass." It kicked off pretty fast because I had all these riffs already written.
Dennis: [I got involved] through our mutual friend and tour driver Matt Raggie—shoutout to Raggie!
Stevie: Raggie!
Dennis: When I first moved to NY, he told me that

a couple of people were looking for a drummer or guitar player. He gave me the number but I didn't call. [laughter] So eventually we ran into each other at a show and Stevie and Sara asked if I wanted to jam. Initially I wanted to play guitar, but I was also happy to drum.
Sara: Yeah, he learned all the songs pretty much in like one day.

MRR: And Gage, how did you join in?
Gage: I saw them for the first time three years ago at a bar I used to work at called Alphaville here in Brooklyn. That was with their first lineup. We became friends later on, got closer, and then they asked me to play for them after their last guitarist quit.
Stevie: Yeah, I was going to start a new band project with him and I figured since we were going to do a band and he was already a fan, we asked him to join.

MRR: How is it playing together in a group?
Steve: Phenomenal. It's fun, these guys are family to me. I mean, Sara is literally family, but you guys I consider my best friends. Playing in a band with people you love is a good feeling because with past lineups it didn't feel like that, it felt more like a commitment.
Dennis: We've been able to go on tour [West Coast] and have that go really smoothly and not really have any friction.
Stevie: I mean, we have stupid friction sometimes, but with any friendships you get clashes. If there weren't disagreements, it would be unnatural. All families argue sometimes.
Dennis: That's because Stevie always wants to start shit.
Stevie: It's not me, man. You motherfuckers want to start shit with me because I'm the wildcard. [laughter]
Sara: [facepalms]

MRR: So who's the predominant songwriter?
Stevie: All of us. Except for the lyrics, Sara and I would write ideas and she would lay them out into their final form.
Dennis: Sara writes the lyrics, and the rest is more of a collaboration.
Gage: Usually me, Stevie, or Dennis will come up with a riff or two, share it, and work from there. We change the song structures a lot and adapt the songs as we see fit to blend with our overall sound or concept. I think we all add some nuance to each others' riffs that we wouldn't normally come up with by ourselves, and that makes our songwriting process pretty special.
Sara: Gage just brought a riff in and we just made a new song today.

MRR: Personally, as an observer, I find that you don't fall into the category of the D-beat bands in Brooklyn; you have your own unique style. Was it an intentional thing to separate yourselves from the more typical sounds of NY?
Sara: Well, yeah...when we first started, a lot of the bands from NY were D-beat or just a different type of sound. I wanted to keep it simple, so I told Stevie that I wanted to sing in Spanish and do something different.
Stevie: Different but simple, like going back to the roots. Not our roots, but music we all first started listening to. Like tupa-tupa (1-2-1-2), you know, simple punk.

MRR: That's what I appreciate about Porvenir Oscuro—you follow your own path and you utilize many influences, not just one. Do you find any resistance to your music, or do you find that people are accepting?
Dennis: I think people have been into it. I also think that it's cool that more bands have been singing in different languages lately, which brings a different dimension...and feeling.
Gage: I think we're well received because it's really easy to pogo and dance to us. We definitely incorporate a ton of different elements and styles of punk, but for the most part we keep our songs straightforward and characteristic of classic UK, Finnish, and Spanish punk that people know and love.

MRR: When putting Porvenir Oscuro together was the intention to have it be something you can dance to?
Gage: Absolutely. Who the hell wants to stand still at a punk show?
Stevie: Definitely, definitely, there's no better feeling than jumping around to your favorite band.
Gage: Until you start getting old and popping your knee outta place jumping around with Yuta from System Fucker on your back.
Stevie: [laughter] On the record, that technically happened during the dance party at Varning, although I messed it up again recently while doing a jump kick during our set.
Sara: Keep fucking up your knee again, you're getting old!

MRR: Like you wanted everybody to be a part of this.
Stevie: Yeah. That's why I wanted it to be tupa-tupa, so the music sounds bouncy and shit. For everybody who doesn't know what that means, it's "1-2-1-2" drum beat in Spanish. [laughter]

MRR: For anyone who doesn't speak Spanish, tell us what the phrase Porvenir Oscuro means.
Sara: It means dark future.

MRR: And do you feel that name translates well into what you want to convey with your lyrics?
Sara: Yeah, we always write lyrics about living in a bleak / dark society. I sing about stuff that can happen to anyone and also that happened to me at some point.
Stevie: We try to write lyrics that revolve around our lives and express our discontent of an unfair, dark, and violent world.

MRR: Do you like playing in New York as compared to anywhere else, or do you get tired of it?
Gage: Well, as far as the US goes, the NY scene seems the biggest and most diverse I've been a part of so far. I love it here, and a ton of people come out. I guess we're considered more interesting or "exotic" in other cities when we tour and sometimes draw bigger crowds outta town, but NYC will always be our home.
Dennis: Things are still active and healthy. New York is a hard place to get by in.
Stevie: It's big and everybody is moving here, but ten-plus years ago it was a really small scene.
Dennis: All we need is new venues.
Sara: We don't play as often now then when we did when we first started. We'll try to play a show once a month, but sometimes our schedules get in the way. Regardless, I think playing out of state is a lot more fun and I feel sometimes we get a better response outside of New York.

MRR: That segues into my next question: do you think lack of venues, especially all-ages places, hampers getting your music out to kids who are just getting into punk?
Dennis: Well, NY is really hard to live in when you're young or underage...
Stevie: Not if you're born here. [laughter] I knew my way around going into 21+ shows and bars in my younger days. Well, I guess a fake ID gave it that push too.
Dennis: But even so, I feel like friends are bummed 'cause they can't go to the bar with us. People don't really hang out in houses that much, so younger kids move to other cities to get by and pay cheaper rent. I think it would be cool to have a more all-ages space instead of playing bars all the time.
Stevie: Yeah, that one time we played JMZ House, that was fun because I saw all these younger punks and I was like "Yo, I've never seen these kids before." I got really stoked on it. Funny thing, that same night the Varukers was playing a 21+ only gig at some swanky bar / venue.
When I was growing up here in NYC, I was one of the youngest punks in NYC, probably still [laughter] so yeah...definitely sucks.
Gage: Yeah, bar culture sucks, and I'm sure there are a lot of young kids who would come out if they could. It's also expensive, which is a bummer if you're a kid without a job. $10–$15 is a lot to cough up for a local show.
Stevie: Our great friend Chi [singer of Anasazi and up and coming band Blu Anxxiety] asked us if we wanted to play in the Bronx to like all these younger generation punks that hardly ever left the area.
Dennis: Yo, I would love to because I feel the Bronx gets forgotten about.
Gage: There's probably an entire scene up there we don't know about.

background photo: Carlos Garcia

Stevie: The problem is that the scene here can be so reclusive, like just Brooklyn. But NYC is so fucking big, it's not just Brooklyn.

MRR: Do you find being female in a punk band difficult, or do you find it easy to play with other people? People have this vision of rock'n'roll as a very male-dominated culture, do you find that same negativity in punk?
Sara: I mean, between friends everything is fine, but at bigger shows I can never tell. At almost every show with people we don't know someone tries to do something like touch me inappropriately. Sometimes it's hard just because of that, and I'm not the kind of person to be just like "Oh, look at me, I'm super tough" or whatever, I don't act like that when were playing. I don't like to do faces or yell at people [while singing]; it doesn't even make sense with the stuff that I sing. It's hard because guys think they can do that back, and it's really stupid.
Gage: Like that one time we played and that guy grabbed you and you decked him in the face.
Sara: Yeah!
Stevie: She hit him with the microphone so hard, you heard a "thoomp! thoomp!"
Sara: That's an example, that guy grabbed my breast and then when I started hitting him with a microphone people were like "oh yeah! She's like pogo-ing" or whatever, and I wasn't. I was defending myself, and everybody was like "That was awesome!" The most frustrating part about it is that when I was hitting him, another guy grabbed me from my vest and pushed me away. I was trying to defend myself. I tried to find the guy but he left, so I couldn't kick his ass after the set.

MRR: Is there always that element of danger with crowd interactions?
Sara: Not every time, but there are people who will do something, and you never know who's there. I feel fine, but I know something can happen because people will do it. It's not dangerous or anything, but you just always have to be prepared for something, and it's not supposed to be like that.

MRR: What bands are you down with right now?
Sara: There's a lot of bands! Ignorantes from Chile, Apără from Mexico, Prision Postumo, Foza Común, the Dark, Sadist, Innocent, and many more. Also, from New York I love Blu Anxxiety and Extended Hell.
Stevie: Tons. But I'm going to give a shout out to Foza Común! They have been a huge hit for me, those guys rule and we had the pleasure of playing with them twice last tour. I also have been heavily listening to Ignorantes from Chile. Those bands remind me a lot of the style of punk i grew up on.
Gage: It's so hard to pick just a few. As far as contemporary NYC bands go I love Headsplitters, Miedo, After, and Blu Anxxiety. I also like the Conscripts, Perdidos, and Adrenochrome if we're not trying to be too New York-centric.
Dennis: The new Lifeless Dark has been played a lot around my house lately, as well as Zygome. Winter is perfect for metal. Also shoutout to Deseos Primitivos.

MRR: How many lineup changes?
Stevie: [laughter] Fuck...
Sara: Four? Three?
Stevie: Jesus, man, uh...
Sara: Jesus was in the band? Oh yeah, he played guitar that one time. [laughter]
Stevie: About three changeups.

MRR: What was the longest lineup?
Stevie: This lineup, this is the official lineup. With this one we did tours and an EP. Overall just more recognition.
Dennis: I do want to make a mention of Bumbah [previous guitar player], who unfortunately passed away in 2017. He contributed a lot of songs that we have on our EP.
Gage: He had some riffs, and I'm very honored to play them.
Stevie: He was a true rock'n'roller. He had health problems and had to step away from the band but gave us his blessings to find someone to replace him. It was devastating news to find out he passed away, I was so sad for awhile.

MRR: Do you want to tell us more about Bumbah? For me, personally, he was an amazing person, and for a man of little words he said a lot.
Stevie: He meant a lot to people who he was close to.
Dennis: While we were on tour in L.A., we made sure to stop by Lemmy's grave in his honor.
Sara: Yeah, everybody knew Bumbah and how he always stood right next to the PA at shows. I miss him a lot.
Stevie: I don't know how he kept his hearing. He was always reserved and didn't try hard to fit into a group or anything, which I admired.

MRR: Any future plans with the band touring? Are you interested in playing more shows outside of the country?
Dennis: My dream is playing South America.
Stevie: My dream is playing Japan.
Dennis: Well, that too.
Gage: All international tours would be fucking awesome. We also want to release a full-length, and we have a few West Coast dates we recently confirmed for this year.
Stevie: Oh yeah, Manic Relapse and Have a Good Laugh fest. Before those fests, we're writing brand new material.
Sara: I definitely want to play Japan and Colombia.

MRR: So what other bands are you in?
Dennis: I'm in Pobreza Mental and Ordinance, which keeps me pretty busy, but it's fun.
Gage: I sing in a post-punk / anarcho band called Pawns, which will be releasing a new EP this year, and I recently started writing and recording some new material for a Crass-style anarcho project I'm looking to take more seriously this coming year.
Stevie: I sing for a new band called Vexine.
Sara: I'm just in Porvenir Oscuro...for now.

MRR: Any last words?
Gage: Book us internationally! I need to get the hell outta this country.
Sara: What Gage said...and ummm...yeah, book us for your funeral.
Stevie: Shout out to everyone who's helped support us and booked our shows, toured with and put us up, Raggie and Drew our east and west coast tour drivers, and Ian for putting out our first EP on his label Always Restrictions.

For booking or any other info, contact: PorvenirOscuroNYC@gmail.com.

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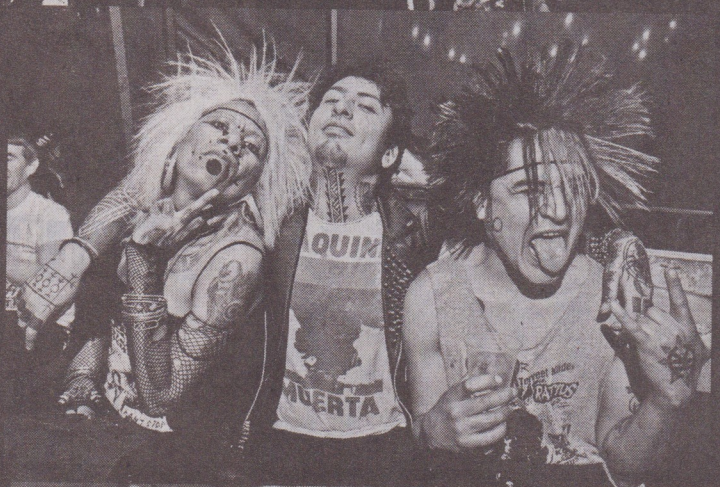

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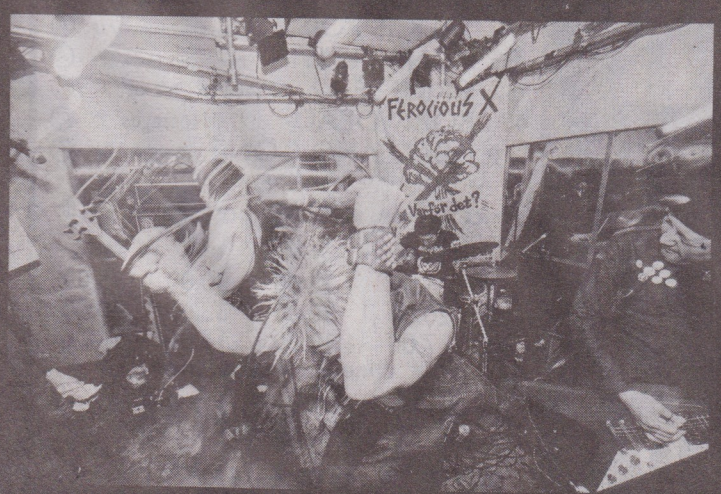

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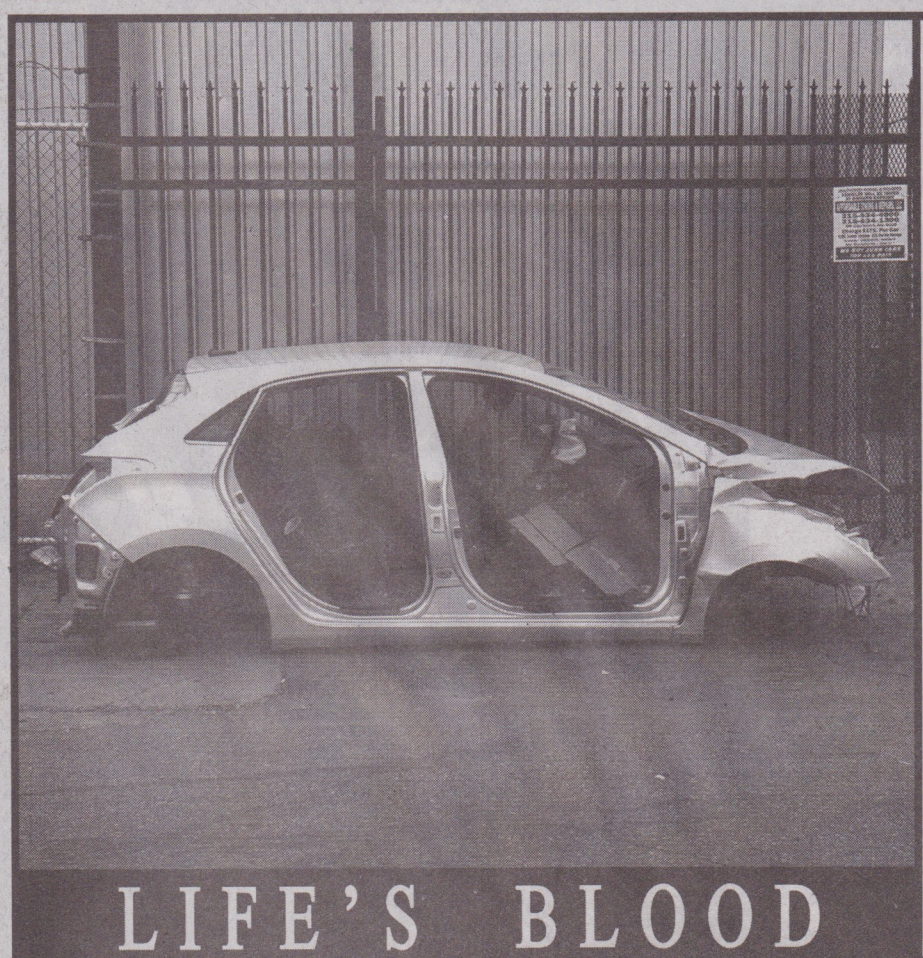

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COME HOLY SPIRIT

Come Holy Spirit is an experimental post-punk trio from Pittsburgh, PA that's been going strong since 2012, and whose dynamics run the gamut from heavy wall of sound to delicate folky moments. The band was interviewed by Heidi Tucker at Babyland, a collectively run venue and community space in Pittsburgh that houses a woodshop, metalshop, individual art studios, and space for activist groups. Gina and Aaron from the band are founding members and help maintain the space. Photography by Sam Barstowe.

MRR: I was wondering about the source of the name. A lot of people must assume you guys are some kind of Christian punk band.

Gina Favano (Bass and Vocals): Yeah, it kind of sucks! The name came about when Aaron and I first started playing together, and went through the phase of coming up with a band name everyone agrees on. I had a banner hanging in my basement (where we first started practicing) that I had found while exploring an abandoned school in the neighborhood. It's pink burlap and has felt letters glued to it that say "Come Holy Spirit." I was like, we can call ourselves this and then we'll have this banner! Now we're stuck with the name, but to me it's accrued meaning over the years. It's like getting an impulsive tattoo when you're young that doesn't have overt meaning to you at the time, but the longer you have it the more meaning it acquires. A lot of our songs tend to have broad connotations, and make reference to... not doctrine, but definitely spiritualism, whatever that can mean. To me it often means music and the power it has to move us. That's how I think about it.

MRR: It is kind of funny, because some of your live shows can be like that, riding a wave, up and down.

Aaron Lindberg (Guitar): It seems like the name represents a general aesthetic of, well, ecstatic energy. One unifying thread in our music is a sort of undercurrent that one would find in certain kinds of folk and primitive music as well as rock, punk, metal etc. that has a sort of a spiritual quality to it.

Gina: That's kind of how I try to approach music in general. Not think about it being genre specific, it's more about energy that's there under the surface, you just can't see it or hear it.

Aaron: Sometimes joyous, sometimes dark.

MRR: I'm curious about what touring's been like for you, and at this age, how it's feeling.

Gina: I think we'll all have different answers for that. For me, it makes touring really important; if it weren't important I wouldn't do it. There are factors that come into play as you get older that can make it pretty difficult. When you're young, the traveling and socializing and driving is part of the appeal, and to me now it's even more about music than it was when I was younger and it was easy to tour. I think it's a form of public service to bring something new to places and have people that might like it listen to it. It's valuable and it's made me value it that much more. The fact that there are still people who will set up shows and put you up at their houses because they value it too, it's beautiful.

MRR: Yeah, like when you're younger you give notice at your job and just jump in the van, but now in your

forties it kind of becomes your job.
Gina: A job you don't get paid for! Or maybe you break even... but being able to bring a live performance to a place feels special.
Sam Pace (Drums & Percussion): It's good for me to get out of Pittsburgh and see new faces—but they're all the same in a way though! Doppelgangers everywhere! I personally eat better and drink less on tour. These guys influence me to want to see the big trees and the ocean more. It feels healthier to me.

MRR: Did you feel better received on the west coast? Not

that it has to be black and white like that, but it does feel really different out there.
Aaron: I think we were received well [on both coasts].
Sam: I think that says something about our band, that we're not in a box so much. They don't know what to think of us anyway, so it's sort of unexpected, if not new.
Gina: That's one of the things I love most about this project: it's appealing to people that love music, period. The three of us are often working from different places musically...it tends not to exclude people that don't adhere to labels as much, like a "metalhead" or whatever.
Sam: I like metal!
Gina: I like metal too! But you know what I'm saying, there will be some old folk guy that will come up to us afterwards and be like "what was that?" It's encouraging to me, when all those different influences can be heard.
Aaron: Touring is hard when you're setting it up and stuff, but once you're doing it, it actually ends ups being pretty easy with so many people being so hospitable and whatnot. It's one of the few opportunities that I have to be the person I want to be. I don't know, that sounds cheesy...

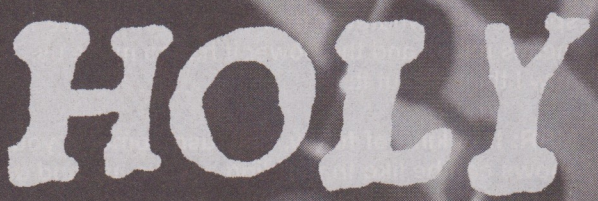
MRR: It doesn't sound cheesy, you get to do what you love and play music instead of swinging a hammer. Did you feel like that when you were younger? I've seen you play with other bands before, like with Hex.
Aaron: Yeah, I've always loved it.
Gina: We played last week in this field in upstate NY to a few kids—
Sam: Like, children.
Gina: Who were heckling us! And Aaron gave the same performance that I had seen him do in crowded bars in New York that same week—I love that! It was the same amount of focus and intensity.

MRR: It really speaks to sincerity!
Gina: Yeah, I think that's the biggest common denominator with us, we all really care about and love music.

MRR: I'm curious about what you guys listen to in the van. Do you take turns with the radio? Cause I can hear a lot of different things in your backgrounds, that are coming out in the songs.
Sam: I just (arbitrarily) grabbed a bunch of CDs for this last trip. Miles Davis is one of my favorites, we didn't listen to him.
Gina: It's literally all over the map. Syrian comp music, field recordings from all over, Otis Redding, punk, lots of Dead Moon and X. Danielle Dax, Big Blood, Minutemen. Aaron has an amazing music selection that he brings. If we're playing every night, sometimes I just welcome quiet.

MRR: It seems like in most of these larger cities, spaces like Babyland are getting eaten up. People come and check out the space here, and are like woah, this still exists in Pittsburgh?
Gina: We played at Machines With Magnets in Providence, which is this beautiful venue with a recording studio and lodging for bands attached. It was amazing, though definitely not a raw, crazy showspace like the ones I used to associate with Providence.

MRR: How do you feel about the scene in Pittsburgh? I'm curious to hear about how you feel supported here. Gina's been here like fourteen years, Aaron nine, Sam is a Pittsburgh original.
Aaron: I feel really supported here, from all different genres. I think there's a really good scene here. There's a lot of good hardcore and punk bands, and experimental stuff



too but there could be more for sure. Tanning Machine is a good band and Alan Lewendowski (Anita Fix).

MRR: You must get asked to play by a lot of different bands, from folk to punk.
Gina: Yes, for sure. For me the music scene feels more supportive than it did around the time I moved here. I had just spent three years or so living in my school bus and doing some really long tours. I moved here and was like, time to start my new band! There were very few women (that I saw) playing out in the punk scene, maybe less than five that played an instrument and performed regularly. It was isolating, not to mention confusing. It's changing, palpably, kind of at the same rate the city itself is changing. There's a girls rock camp now, that's been going for a few years. That was mind-blowing to me to move to a major city and realize there wasn't one here, or have to explain why it's important. We don't get called "female fronted" anymore, which is nice.

MRR: Yeah, Pittsburgh definitely gets teased for being like a decade or so behind other major cities.
Gina: Yeah, it's great in a lot of ways but frustrating too! Our friend Madeline Campbell (Women in Sound, Accessible Recording) has really helped put the city out there in a way that it's part of a larger musical conversation in the US. I

feel good about it and have also watched it change a lot. Anyone that liked music would all be at a show together, because the scene was so much smaller. So there'd be like spoken word, and a metal band, and some folk punk or whatever all at the same show.
Now you're much more likely to roll up to a show and have it be like five punk bands all on the same bill. But maybe that's starting to shift again too.
Sam: I see Pittsburgh as more of a Galapagos Island, kinda separated by distance from some of the heavy trends, evolving in its own way. It's not quite Midwest and not quite east coast, and it has a lot of funny talking pirate people. There will always be ebb and flow in any band, or scene, so how we are supported or received is in constant flux. It's complicated. I feel like those scenes have always been around—there's always been like a hardcore scene, art rock scene, etc. They maybe used to intermingle more when I was a kid.
Aaron: What I like about punk shows compared to other genres is how much the crowd is a participant and part of the show. Especially when everybody starts moving around and tripping over each other and crap.
Gina: We used to have an ongoing joke list going of "reasons why we won't get asked to play Skullfest."

MRR: I was going to ask you about that! Skullfest has totally put Pittsburgh on the map in this way, they just threw the tenth one!
Gina: Haha, it's just a joke. We all value and care about the folks that put it on, but it's funny how little we fit into that scene.
Sam: The steel drum ... ha ha ha.
Aaron: I think we haven't played it because Gina is usually out of town in summer around that time. I keep hoping we'll get a chance to play it one day. It's like a special holiday for Pittsburgh. People say "Happy Skullfest" to each other. I still think of us as a punk band. Fuck it, why not?
Gina: I always felt like I ended up in the subculture by default. My formative punk experiences would have to be staying up late listening to the college radio station in Philly where I grew up. In high school I would go by myself to see bands like F.O.D. As a damaged, oddball kid I was comfortable being that in the punk scene, I felt like I finally didn't stand out. You get to be what whatever you want, you can make it whatever you want. It's weird to notice parts of the scene being so formulaic, like you have to adhere to an aesthetic dogma. It starts feeling like highschool again, it's goofy.

MRR: Yeah, it's supposed to be liberating! Some of the shows at Babyland have been more of the diverse ones I've been to lately. Pittsburgh is changing; the techie thing. It used to be so abandoned.
Sam: I do appreciate the hardcore scene here. Pittsburgh keeps it raw and rough, it's not for the faint of heart.

MRR: The pendulum (in Pittsburgh) is swinging with more women being in bands , the culture is changing.
Gina: We often get compared to the Ex and Dog Faced Hermans, which can get tedious, but ultimately, they're fucking great bands. I remember the first time I heard those "anarcho punk bands," I was like, ok this is where it's at—you can hear all the influences, all the rhythms overlapping

MRR: GW Sok (from the Ex) is on the last album! Tell me how that came to be?
Gina: The long and short of it is he was on tour with this UK band Action Beat, and we shared a bill (at Belvedere's) and they all actually ended up crashing at Aaron's. We exchanged emails and kept in touch a little bit. We had these two songs we had been working on that were on the verge of becoming overwritten and I was struggling a little with how to integrate vocals at that point. I was like, let's just ask him, what do we have to lose? We had noticed that since he left the Ex he was doing all sorts of collaborations. He said, "Yes, it would be an honor" (which blew my mind), and then we were like, OK! Now we have to finish these songs! So it was really a couple more months after that of finishing the tracks and sending files back and forth.

MRR: Was he writing lyrics?
Gina: It was collaborative. I had a theme in mind for each of the songs and was in the process of writing words, when we decided to hand them off to him. I gave him one word for each track as a working title, shared a little of what I had been thinking about, then he took that and wrote the words around it. It was kind of delightful to see what someone else would do, because it was different than what I would have come up with. He was all around great. Polite, super generous with his time. It was a great experience.
Sam: There's a police siren on one the tracks if you listen really close.
Gina: Yeah, a Dutch siren.

MRR: How exotic!
Gina: Yeah when he emailed me the first track I was in our boathouse in Minnesota and it took like an hour for the computer to download the audio out on the river. When I was finally able to press play and heard his vocals over us for the first time, it was like... "Aaaaaaah!" Then the second track came the next day, just as great but no screaming. It's funny how your brain adjusts.

Heidi Tucker is the proprietor of Lili Café in Polish Hill, venue host, and stalwart supporter of the PGH music scene.

Come Holy Spirit are preparing to start recording their fourth full-length album. They are planning a southern US tour in March and their first European tour in 2019. Hear their music at comeholyspirit1.bandcamp.com.

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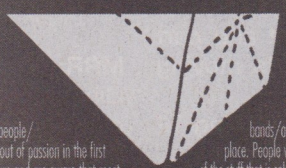

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NO BORDERS

Originating from a number of different countries from all over the world and coming together as best friends in a foreign land: based in London, England, DIY feminist punks MOLAR have been making waves for three years. With their third EP Straniero *out now Ian Chaddock talks to Su, Eilidh, Sandra, and Livia about their unique story.*

MRR: You're all from countries that are quite different from each other in many ways. Coming together through music, was it a shared love or were you coming from different musical backgrounds?

Su: Well, it was mostly because Adriana, Sandra, and Eilidh have the same taste in music and I was putting on shows that they would all come to. They met at a show, and they used to come to Everything Sucks nights all the time. That's how I related to them, because they were coming to my shows and having a great time. Eilidh's best friend did a set-up at Fest for her to hang out with us because she had to leave...

Eilidh: And I have no friends. *[laughter]*

Su: She said to Eilidh, "Those are the people from England—go be friends with them." Because her friend Kiera is very outgoing, she came to talk to us so we would take care of Eilidh while she had to leave to go back to Minneapolis. Adriana and Sandra were friends from childhood, in Brazil, even though Sandra is Dutch-Brazilian. It's very complicated!

MRR: Putting aside the whole stupid "girls in bands" angle, the fact that you're all from different countries is quite an interesting aspect of the band. Was it something that you liked or wanted to have?

Su: No...

Sandra: When we talked about getting Liv in, the fact that you're Italian definitely helped. This is all we know.

Eilidh: I think it's just that when we met each other, we were all a bit weird, for different reasons. When we found each other, that was a thing we could bond over. Even though we're all really different, being kind of out of place was a thing that made us relate.

Sandra: And we could all be like, "why is England like this?"

Su: "Why are British people so this or that?" *[laughter]*

MRR: You're all from different places, but it would take a city like London to bring you together I suppose?

Eilidh: We met Livia through DIY Space For London.

Su: I saw they were doing First Timers with our now other band, Slab City. When I saw Slab City, I thought "I want to be with those guys," and then Adriana left...

Livia: You didn't know what a nightmare I was going to be. *[laughter]*

Su: Adriana left and I thought, "guys, Livia's great and she's also Italian." *[laughter]*

Livia: But that felt right. If anyone else with a samey composition background-wise had asked me to play with them, because I'd only been playing for not even six months, I would have been terrified. But you made me feel like we could all bond because of the fact that you all had mixed backgrounds, that made it really comfortable. Because I didn't know you guys at all.

Su: But I felt like I knew you. I felt like we knew each other for years.

Eilidh: I also remember meeting you before we knew each other, serving you at the bar, and you spoke to me in a perfect English accent and then turned to someone and spoke in Italian and I was like, "who's that?"

MRR: It seems like quite an important part of who you are, both as people but also as a band. For example, with the t-shirt with the globe on and it read "NO BORDERS." How much of that would you say is a central part to your songwriting?

Sandra: It definitely is. "Auslannerwahlrecht" is about only that. There are things in your language.

Livia: "There's obviously a lot happening at the moment, in the UK and elsewhere. This is an experience that we've all had to different degrees. I think that people kind of forget that shit in the news that makes you angry is actually very real for some people. Something that's been really nice about this band has been being able to rely on the fact that we're there for each other, in a real sense. Like when Brexit hit—Sandra and I are in a position where we're trying to make our status in the UK legit, for instance. While we don't have any immediate friends who voted for Brexit, you do find yourself talking to people and they say things like "this isn't going to affect you because you've been here for ten years." They don't understand that there's legal stuff you've got to deal with and then there's psychological stuff to deal with, having a mixed cultural background. That's something we want to discuss openly, through the band, trying to make a platform for other people. We've been tweeting about helping people going through

joe briggs photo

Ian Chaddock photo

paperwork, for example, making it more accessible for people who are having to go through the visa process.
Su: You don't understand these things until you go through them. It's so draining and exhausting. You feel like people are after you, even if you're legal. But what if they say no at the next step? You feel like "what is my life going to be like?" I've been through that years ago, but they're going through that right now, and it's something that definitely we can understand. But we're drawn to each other too. For example, Sandra growing up in South America, it means that I can say things to her, like when we're walking down a street and I can say to her "these trees are like South American trees" or I turn back to Livia and say "Latinos do this..." and she says "Italians do this..." so it's interesting.

MRR: That feeds into the themes, like anxiety and sexism, in your songs as well though, right?
Eilidh: I think a lot of the angry songs are about that. "Auslannerwahlrecht" is a very obvious one, but I think that even our happiest song, "Queens of Summer," is about being really far away from home and finding people who you feel are kind of like you. It's like a little surrogate family.
Sandra: Then all having to move again because of life circumstances and they're all spread across the planet.
Eilidh: It's about just a really nice summer of feeling at home, which doesn't happen sometimes.

MRR: Playing shows at DIY Space For London and developing as a band there almost, has it been important for you to have that space?
Sandra: So much. It's the nicest place to play or to have a show at. We haven't always played our best there, but it's the most comfortable.
Eilidh: It's a space, but it's also a platform. It's where we met Livia, it's where we met so many people that put us on.

MRR: I know a handful of people there, but you seem to know everyone, so it must feel like it's home when you're there?
Livia: I know we've all started playing instruments recently and we've all been in London for a bunch of years, but until recently I was mostly involved in writing stuff. I would often go to shows alone because not many of my writer friends were into that. What's been really nice has been meeting people who are doing real work, a call-out for helping with visas, or First Timers, where we met when I played with Slab City. I think the best thing about DIY Space and the DIY scene is when people actually make stuff happen that makes a tangible change for others. With the band, we've experienced the good side of that in a real way. I was so amazed at how welcoming people on the DIY circuit were when we went to the North of England. People feeding you, giving you free places to stay. It breeds more kindness.
Sandra: We look for it whenever we play in a different city, or country even, that's the kind of place we always end up in.
Su: Definitely, because when we have had to play outside of our DIY bubble, we have felt so uncomfortable and it has been the only place where we have been heckled and it's been super weird. We played a big show and Adriana had left, and it was before Livia came in, so a male friend helped us out, and it was a place where all the questions were for him. "Oh, you're the manager?" or "where are your guitars?" That would never happen in any of DIY scenes, in Sheffield or Leeds or London. We were so "oh my God, we miss our DIY bubble."

MRR: That network seems to be growing and it seems to have helped you. In a relatively short space of time, you've toured and played shows in Scandinavia.
Su: And when we played Malmo it was also a DIY space called Enskiftet, and it was people who were really welcoming and super nice. It was the same with Copenhagen, the people from Charla Fantasma who live there. Also, all the bands here in the DIY scene are incredible. Our friends have taken us to Durham, have taken us everywhere, and they have booked us shows. We try to do the same for them here. It's one thing to put on shows, but it's something that when you experience it as a band, it's so mind-blowing.
Livia: I've always thought that if you're lucky enough to be able to have knowledge of an artform, you have a duty to share that: you should try and help people who are learning to do a thing by sharing what skills you have—that's always been a core value for me, as a writer, too. But outside DIY, this isn't something you should take for granted: not everybody embraces that stance, and you can get burnt trying to be supportive of people who won't always reciprocate. It's funny because that kind of attitude doesn't really benefit anyone. It's a really ridiculous idea that "competition" in the arts should even be a thing. If anything, being part of the DIY community brings into a sharper focus how talented a lot of people are. One person's talent doesn't trump others'. Once you put people in an environment that's conductive and you don't make them self-conscious or feeling shit about themselves, then simply...well, *more* great stuff happens.

MRR: That kind of thing seems so much more important now than ever because there's so much shit going on in the world.
Sandra: Isn't it crazy to think that this time around in politics, the youth have had such a powerful effect? All our friends are, if not activists, are telling people to vote for the right thing, and I guess that's a huge relief, that you can have your own little bubble.
Su: For the many, not the few.
Livia: We're canvassing. I don't know if I qualify as a young person anymore because I'm now 30, but you hear so many shitty think pieces about millennials and actually, most of my friends have this real sense of desperation where you want to make positive change and you're sort of kettled into a society that doesn't allow for that. Then you come across the DIY scene and you're like, "fuck me,

this is going on? I'm going to give it my whole." It's good that activism is becoming more visible because I think that a lot of people feel isolated, and desperate, I think that's the word. They put their energy somewhere and nothing happens, so they just feel worse.

MRR: Obviously Slant 6 were an influence because you cover "What Kind of Monster." Do you think your influences have changed as you've been in the band?

Sandra: We like playing faster now.

Su: I don't think we have ever thought "play a riff that sounds like this" or "why don't we get the drums that sound like that."

Sandra: Also, we have really different tastes.

Livia: Even when we're in the car trying to choose something to put on the radio I'm like "I don't know."

Eilidh: Su's a '90s girl.

Su: But we listen to everything from Mariah Carey and Backstreet Boys to...

Eilidh: That's true, we were going to do a Mariah cover.

MRR: Do you think that's why your songs all sound quite different? I'm sure you've had a lot of different terms applied to your music, whether it's "indie punk" or "post-punk" or "Riot Grrrl" thrown at you, for no reason?

Su: For women, it's always Riot Grrrl. "This Riot Grrrl band, they sound like Sleater-Kinney." Not because we don't think those bands are great, but we don't sound like them.

Livia: I think some of our songs do sound a bit like Riot Grrrl, but because it's like a constant thing, this lazy comparison, you end up saying "no, I don't sound like Sleater-Kinney, even though they're one of my favorite bands." It's just a reaction. Sleater-Kinney are not even Riot Grrrl, anyway.

Eilidh: The Riot Grrrl label is a very problematic thing for many reasons, and it's just lazy to use it.

Su: Especially because I'm not white. *[laughter]*

Sandra: Because we don't have a defined sound, we end up on quite a few diverse shows. Iron Chic is one end of the spectrum, and that metal all-dayer was the other end, and they were both so fun. It kind of works, we hope, and we end up in different places, which is the fun part of having a diverse sound.

Eilidh: I think though, in terms of the actual songs, for me when I write things, it's often I listen to something and think "it's really cool how they do that," but I listen to a lot of different types of things, so sometimes it's two things from opposite stuff that somehow gets put together.

Livia: I quite like that we've got different tastes because we're still learning and everybody's got their own little agenda.

Eilidh: *[laughter]* That's so true!

Livia: What were you learning yesterday?

Sandra: "American Girl" by Tom Petty.

Livia: While I sat at home on EquipBoard trying to figure out J Mascis's pedal chain.

MRR: What have been some of the highlights so far? You've done the tours of the UK and played abroad.

Eilidh: Definitely touring is just so fun.

Sandra: That first tour was so good and we were just like "if this is what touring is, let's do it all the time!"

Eilidh: The two we've done so far have been so nice. I get a little bit emotional about how nice everything is when we're on tour.

MRR: Do you have moments?

Livia: Do we have moments? It's just a moment. Then ten minutes later we're all napping in a pile.

Eilidh: Playing in Copenhagen was amazing.

Sandra: Sheffield is always great. One of my favorite shows was when Brexit happened. We played Manchester one night on our first tour and we were following Brexit and we were in a terrible place emotionally. Then we wake up to these horrible Brexit results, with twelve of us and at least ten of us are foreign, either EU nationals or beyond, and then we were playing Sheffield at Audacious Art Experiment and LaDIY put us on. It was just incredible because everyone was sad but was like, "okay, now we're going to have a really good time." Something happened and it was amazing.

Su: I remember that Adriana said "we're MOLAR and we're all fucking immigrants."

Eilidh: We were taken under the wing of all these people that we'd never met and they said "put some glitter on your face" and made us feel welcome. The day, when we played Manchester and had Livia's hazing, was great too. It was a lovely day, but the show was a bit messy. Afterwards we went swimming in a lake and we swam in toxic algae and we were fine!

Su: The band that pees in a lake together stays together.

Livia: We looked each other in the eyes and we pissed in the lake. It was great, it was a bonding moment.

MRR: What bands do you feel particularly close to that you've toured or played with?

Su: Crumbs, Pale Kids, DirtyGirl (RIP), Honey Joy. Martha forever because JC has been a dream to us.

Sandra: Neurotic Fiction.

Eilidh: Charla Fantasma for sure.

Livia: I miss Crumbs every day!

MRR: Where else would you like to tour?

Su: We would love to tour Europe. When I tell you that our name is not out, it's because we don't have contacts.

Eilidh: We do, we just have random ones.

Livia: I've never been to the US in my life.

Eilidh: Bring Livia outside Europe.

Livia: I think that would be too much for me, but I'd love to.

Su: Who knows?

MRR: How was the recording process for the new EP?

Su: It was really cool, first because I felt a lot more comfortable with the whole process. I mean, we have more experience and know our instruments a lot better, what we have and need to do, etc. It was also the first time recording with Livia, finally bringing her sound to the band's recordings. She is super into a specific sound for her guitar, which I love.

Sandra: Also Mark, who recorded us, is an actual saint and brilliant man.

MRR: What are the themes of the new songs, and how did you choose the title?

Su: As always, it's about our lives and what we are going through. There is a song about Venezuela and how fucked up politics are there. My stepdad was put in prison because he took a picture of a protest, a picture he didn't even get to download from his camera. Some crazy shit for sure. The EP is called *Straniero*, which is "Foreigner" in Italian, so all of us.

Sandra: We're all definitely foreigners in most of the countries we inhabit (or have inhabited), and fun things like Brexit or other crazy referendums will reinforce that. A lot of the songs are about some of this displacement and these crazy things that happen in countries we call home and are reflective of this very strange time we're living in.

Eilidh: "Auslannerwahlrecht" is about a horrible little racist referendum that happened a few years ago in Luxembourg, known only for being a rich tax haven and rarely thought of as being a place with actual people living there, including by its own population, apparently. All the songs are pretty negative, apart from "Weights + Values," which is about feeling pushed to always quantify yourself and everything you do, but also the feeling of being grateful to have a person to sit through all of that bean counting with you. Then ultimately not giving a shit about it and driving off into the sunset with your mates. "Courage" is about a ritual in my old house of eating a "courage sandwich" (not a metaphor, a literal sandwich) before venturing into the world and all the fuckery of being a woman in public space.

MRR: Would you say that your sound has evolved on the new EP?

Su: We definitely have a different sound, we sound a little bit darker. I think it's because of Livia's guitar sound and because of the songs' subject matters. We are probably angrier.

Dave McManus photo

SIGNAL CRIMES

I've known members of the UK hardcore punk bands Heresy and Ripcord since the mid 1980s. Now they're together again under the name Signal Crimes and have released Perfidious Albion, *which has been called one of the hottest hardcore punk records of 2018. Lyrically, it's a harsh critique of the current social, political, and social climate in England, leading up to the Brexit in the spring of 2019. I interviewed Welly, the singer, who has also published the* Artcore *fanzine since 1986. Interview by Helge Schreiber.*

MRR: All of the Signal Crimes band members have a long history of playing in other punk bands. What are some of them?
OK—the list is fairly long, ha ha. Steve (drums), Kalv (bass), and Baz (guitar) all played in Heresy together. Baz also played in Ripcord, Can't Decide, Dumbstruck, and Violent Arrest—which I did some vocals for later on when original member Steve Hazzard left. Kalv and Steve also played in Meatfly, Geriatric Unit and Sixhundredandsixtysixdead together, with Steve also doing time in Endless Grinning Skulls and Plasmid. Kalv also played in Force Fed. I previously did vocals for Four Letter Word, State Funeral, and Cognitive Dissidents. I think that pretty much covers it to date.

Could you tell us more about how you guys got together? In the beginning it was secret that you teamed up: no band name, no details on which band members were included, just that something "steamin' hot" was happening.
I was sworn to secrecy. There was no band name until we recorded, so that was probably part of it. The story is basically that in the late stages of Violent Arrest, Baz mentioned that he was doing a one-off recording with Steve and Kalv with the idea of slowing things down a bit and going for a more DOA and Personality Crisis approach, as he'd been writing some slower stuff. He asked if I'd be interested in doing vocals, and I agreed. Violent Arrest split, some time passed, and I emailed Baz asking if that other band idea ever got going. He replied and said they'd had a few practices, and would I still be interested? I agreed. It was always intended as a one-off from the off. Everyone had too many other commitments to get involved in gigs or touring, as that's a whole different level of preparedness. We were offered gigs without anyone even hearing the music, which was strange.

You guys live in different parts of England. How did you manage to rehearse, and where did you practice? Right away you recorded a whole bunch of songs for your first 12" release, *Perfidious Albion*. Did you expect to be that fast?
Kalv and Steve live in Nottingham, Baz lives in Bristol, and I lived in Cardiff. The whole thing was done in about four practices, I think two in Bristol and two in Nottingham, of which I only went to one. Then we recorded. It was all over in a flash. Baz had the songs pretty much written; he has a digital portable studio. So they recorded their practices and sent me the songs, I wrote the lyrics and emailed over some possible tweaks to song structures, then I recorded some rough vocals onto the practice tapes through a cheap mic into my computer and sent them back. They booked the studio and we did it in two days, with some remaining mixing and mastering done later. I did all the vocals in under an hour. It was all done to be very immediate, over and out—a bit like a hardcore song.

England's social climate seems to be shattered by Brexit. There's a rise of dumb assholes with populist and openly right-wing views, and the economic situation for businesses and private households seem to have gone worse because no one knows how the Brexit will affect the future. Your song "Rise of the Right" directly deals with this.
In "Rise of the Right," the first verse is about how the current tactic of the far right is to flip the narrative and play the victim. By utilizing "free speech" and devices like Brexit, they managed again to attain a high level of free publicity and use it for political gain. This has also been happening in many other countries across the world, obviously. The far right has also been aided by the use of the internet to spread racist bullshit for the unthinking and reactionary to buy into.
The second verse takes on the response of "the left," which seems to be either denial or a policy of defeat by seeking solace in smaller victories on social issues—rather than the mass working-class mobilization that is required. At a left-wing protest you'll see a hundred different placards, at a right-wing protest only one. And working class people need to realize that once you attain a bigger victory in solidarity, the solutions they seek to the other injustices will follow, not the other way around.
Onto Brexit: one of the main tactics of neoliberalism has been to erode and destroy working-class identity, the only power that can successfully oppose Capital. This has been going on for decades, and whenever opposition to neoliberal policies arise, or a level of consciousness among the working class is reached, then the same old bogeymen are wheeled out. In recent years it has been Islamophobia and fear of refugees that all rose from the destabilization of the countries most recently plundered and devastated by

climate change—all as a direct result of those capitalist and neoliberal policies. The appearance of populist far-right candidates in elections has more to do with the establishment maintaining and consolidating power, not the populist revolutions they are sold as. From the "Rise of the Right" chorus: "Vote against your interests, rise of the right. They already think you're stupid, stop proving them right."

Brexit has been a very destructive series of events for UK society. The vote was originally tabled because the one thing that has always historically divided the UK Conservative party is Europe and the EU, so former Prime Minister David Cameron promised a referendum to head off an imminent threat to his power from the the far-right UKIP party in the 2016 election. UKIP, with no elected members of Parliament, had gained years of free publicity from the anti-EU billionaire-owned media in the UK—media owned by offshore interests who want to keep the UK out of any possible EU tax reform. Scare stories about immigrants went on for years in the papers, while Nigel Farage was free to spout his racist shit every day into living rooms across the country. The Conservatives also view the EU as a hindrance to turning the UK into a fully capitalist U.S.-run operation, and in the process removing the final remaining aspects of post-WWII Socialist policies such as free healthcare, welfare, workers' rights, health, safety—the list goes on.

Brexit is the inevitable conclusion of Thatcherism and the neoliberal policies introduced in the Reagan era. It began in the UK with the sale of social housing and the subsequent creation of mass debt. This, along with the removal of banking regulation, the destruction of manufacturing, and the crushing of trade unions, culminated in a financial crisis ten years ago that allowed for further Disaster Capitalist opportunities. The mass migration of people due to wartime destabilization gave the racist rhetoric a tangible bogeyman. The UK right have been working for decades toward this very outcome. And as soon as they seized power in the UK in 2010 with their Liberal Democrat enablers, most of the top Conservatives went straight to Washington to gain further influence. Look up Atlantic Bridge, a charity started by Thatcher and run by Brexiteer Liam Fox. Brexit is no accident—it is a permanent consolidation of power by the right-wing establishment that utilized idiots exposed to decades of racist propaganda in order to achieve their desired result. They want out of the EU not because, as they claim, it is too undemocratic—they want out because for them it is *too* democratic.

The title *Perfidious Albion* can be understood as a critique of England. What did you mean by it? Also tell us about the cover art: an 19th century photo of many human skulls, displayed on a wall like a painting.
The title is an pejorative term for Britain going back to the British Empire. It refers to how Britain has historically been a treacherous and untrustworthy actor in the world. Lesser known in the UK for obvious reasons, it seemed to me to be the perfect title for the times of Brexit. The cover art is a photo of British Major General Horatio Gordon Robley from 1895. Behind him is his collection of Mokomokai, or the preserved tattooed heads of the Maori people. The murdering of the Maori and removal of their heads was done for sport and financial gain. It struck me as the perfect image to represent the title. It shows what the racist British empire actually represented, rather than how it is now being advertised for the purposes of post-Brexit trade negotiations. I've already received a message on the Signal Crimes Facebook page telling me that we "wouldn't get away with publishing record covers like this in New Zealand. Pics like this are very sacred to Maori and using pics of their ancestors or cultural heritage for promotional gains could be extremely culturally insensitive to them." It wasn't used for "promotional gain," but as a political statement against the actions of the general. I don't see what is wrong with that.

How did you come up with the graphic on the insert of your record, which shows a spider (with a Union Jack body), eating dead humans who are caught in his web. Does England suck its citizens completely dry? And what made you add two quotes by Aneurin Bevan and Carl Sagan?
I did some research of the phrase online and found these old illustrations which are from "Das Perfide Albion," a German propaganda pamphlet from WWI by pan-German activist Alfred Geiser. It is full of these completely anti-British etchings and cartoons that perfectly represented what I was trying to convey with the concept. Aneurin Bevan was a Welsh Socialist, the founder of the NHS (National Health Service), and Minister for Health in the UK from 1945 to 1951 under Clement Attlee. The quote is from *In Place of Fear* from 1952 (misattributed as *"Freedom From Fear"* on the record). It succinctly describes the issue that is still at hand, I think; "There are three forces active in society: they are private property, poverty, and democracy. Either poverty will use democracy to win the struggle against property, or property, in fear of poverty, will destroy democracy." And we appear to be heading towards the latter right now.

The Carl Sagan quote is from his 1995 book *The Demon-Haunted World*, which defends science over religion and superstition. I think it accurately describes where we find ourselves right now; "Pseudoscience and superstition will seem year by year more tempting, the siren song of unreason more sonorous and attractive. Where have we heard it before? Whenever our ethnic or national prejudices are aroused, in times of scarcity, during challenges to national self-esteem or nerve, when we agonize about our diminished cosmic place and purpose, or when fanaticism is bubbling up around us—then, habits of thought familiar from ages past reach for the controls. The candle flame gutters. Its little pool of light trembles. Darkness gathers. The demons begin to stir." The prescience is palpable. Will the reawakening of conspiracy theories, xenophobia, religious fundamentalism; superstitions, and fear of the unknown see humanity crawl back into its cave, or move on and face the challenges ahead?

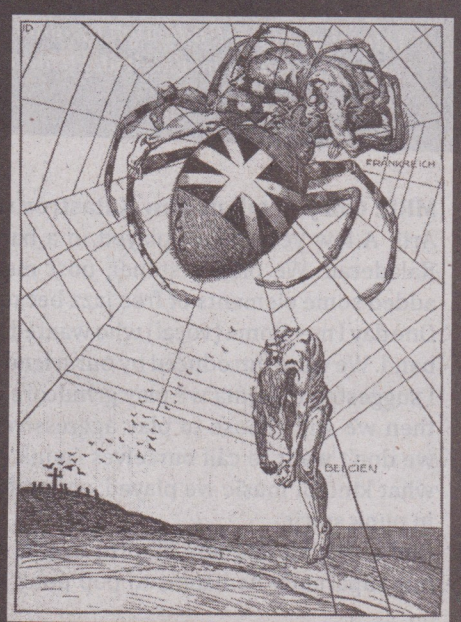
You also criticize the use of modern technologies in your song "Cold Digital World." I understand it as any technology being used mindlessly without questioning. What's your intention in that song?
The intention was to describe a near-future scenario in light of rapid technological advancement, but where new ideas are simply used to reinforce old class divisions. The line at the end sums it up; "But beyond the glass, out in the cold, a different class won't know the code." Because human "progress" under capitalism is often about simply finding new ways to keep people out, unlike the advertising suggests. New job-specific techno-speak accessible only to those with certain financial or educational backgrounds, things like that. And it also describes how we blindly accept technology even when it is also being used to surveil us: "Moral authority, deferred, transferred. Wolves in the pen, no panic in the herd." In light of the subject matter, I was also trying to give a nod to Philip K. Dick and Ray Bradbury: "So crammed with facts, superficial. Look 'em in the eye, are they artificial?"

During the summer of 2018 you moved to the US. What made you decide to move?
My lady got offered a job in Arizona, and we decided a change would be good. The Brexit thing also seemed like good timing, and both our jobs in the UK were getting harder and more demanding, like everyone else's. Yes, I know Trump is here so it might seem like out of the frying pan, into the fire, but I'd like to think it's temporary, whereas the Brexit leap off a cliff will be very permanent. I've been coming to the US on tour for 25 years, so why not? There's good and bad everywhere and in everything, and if you get an opportunity in life, you've got to take it. It's better to regret something you have done than something you haven't, as they say. We can always go back if it doesn't work out.

What's the actual status of Signal Crimes right now? Are you planning on doing future shows? New recordings?
Like I said, it was always a one-off project, so that's the end, unfortunately. A bit like a live set, it's better to leave the crowd wanting more than bore them to death.

One last question. Since 1986 you've been making *Artcore* fanzine, which is really well-liked among the inner circle of the DIY punk scene in Europe. Will you keep doing Artcore from the US?
Yes. I'm still working on the logistics, but I'm also working on a new issue, which will be out hopefully around spring 2019. I've been doing it for 33 years now—I don't see a reason to stop. Thanks for your questions and the opportunity.

https://signalcrimes.bandcamp.com



KATASTROV

Katastrov from Bandung, Indonesia plays music inspired by proto-rockers such as Black Sabbath and Motörhead with influences from Discharge, Doom, Entombed, and At The Gates. They consider themselves a rock band with punk spirit. They just made their first mini-album, *Kultus*, a fast and aggressive record. The band was formed in 2016 by Roma (vocals), Arief (Guitar), and Satria (drums). As one of the newer bands in Bandung, we talked about the differences between the independent music scene in Bandung from a few years ago, the influence of cigarette companies on independent communities, and about religious fundamentalism that is very relevant to the social conditions of Indonesia lately.

Interview and introduction by Idhar Resmadi. Photos provided by Eki Aria, Firman Rohmansyah

MRR: Can you tell us how Katastrov was formed?

Arif: A few years ago I played in a band with Satria named Kaladerau. We played stoner, post metal, doom music, and added some elements of free jazz because I took jazz lessons. One day I met Roma (vocal) who wanted to play in an indie-rock band. We were introduced by our friend named Reggi. Initially I suggested to Roma we play grindcore or powerviolence, but then we still choose to play aggressive music like punk. But we don't want to call ourselves "punk." If some people asked what kind of music we played, we prefer calling it "rock," but in punk spirit.

Roma: We all like any kind of music. Arif really likes metal but apparently he listens to pop punk bands like New Found Glory. Satria also has wide musical tastes, in the past, his band contributed to the death metal compilation *Panceg Dina Galur.* When our band was formed, it started with a lot of brainstorming. We never practiced and didn't have songs yet. From the start we were interested in using the name "Catastrophe" but it turned out that the band name already existed. We choose the German language "Katastrofe" and replace it with Katastrov. Because it seemed cool here to switch "fe" with "v." So cult.

MRR: There's the lyrics of your song entitled "Lemmy"—is that about Lemmy Kilmister from Motorhead?

Arif: Yes right, I had an idea after watching the Lemmy documentary on the BBC. Then I was interested to try

and make music like Motorhead. Roma immediately wrote the lyrics and I made the song.

Roma: We saw the Lemmy documentary on the BBC and saw his rock 'n' roll lifestyle. Our song tells the story of a wild lifestyle like his.

But is your music inspired by Motörhead?

Arif: Motörhead bridges punk and metal. They inspired a lot of rock music and other music such as Discharge, which also inspired us. Every punk and metalhead usually agrees on Motörhead. Our music is not too punk nor too metal. We just loved to mix them both. We also don't like being categorized, good music is good music.

Rome: Yes, because we all love Motörhead. Especially their music that is rough, fast, and dirty. We use that element in our music.

MRR: You are counted as a new band even though you already have the experience of being in a band before. Are there any differences with the Bandung scene from ten or fifteen years ago?

Arief: In the past, there were lots of gigs every week. So that meant the conditions were more intimate. But nowadays there is a shift because of the many choices of events, not just music. Currently there are so many musical performances in Bandung, and the biggest problem about the band and scene regeneration is a venue problem—we need a concert hall. This is the domino effect of the AACC Tragedy ten years ago that ended the lives of eleven young people. As a result of the tragedy, there were fewer musical performances, permission to play live was difficult, and many local distros went bankrupt. This independent music used to be able to develop because of the support of local distros. But I think now maybe independent music in Bandung is coming back nearly as well as twenty years ago.

Roma: I first started playing in bands in middle school. In Bandung, there are many music lovers who start to get into music in their teens. In the past, when I was hanging out at Riotic Distros (one of the oldest distros in Bandung), there were many bands that didn't have albums or singles but could still perform at various gigs and school art performances. Many of the school's art performances were looking for local bands with diversity in genre. Even before you have an album, as long as you had a demo you could also appear at community gigs. But currently, if you don't have an album it's rather hard to play a show. So at the least you have to have a mini album or an album. If you don't have a connection to an event organizer or any music collective, your band will have difficulty playing a show, especially if you don't have a community that is close and supportive.

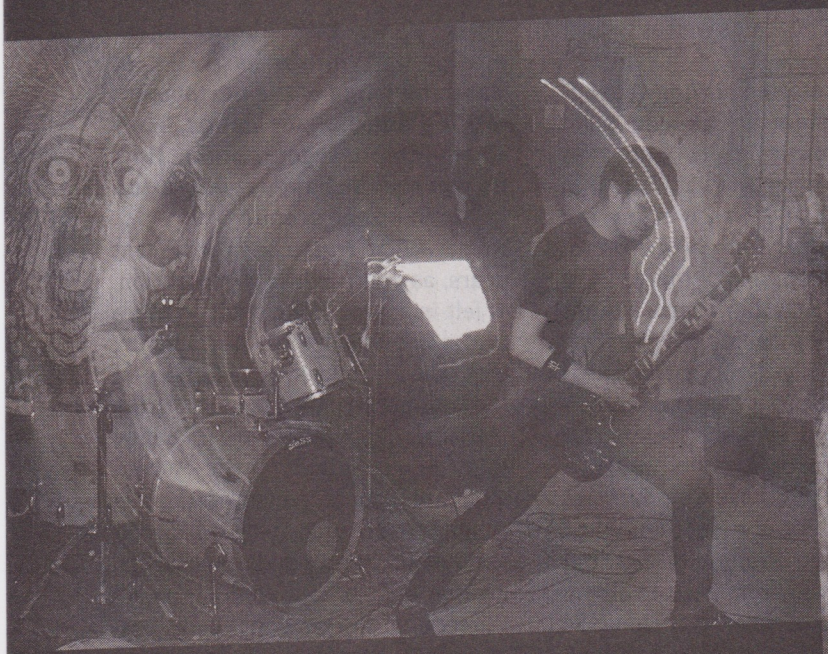
Arief: Nowadays it's a lot of collective gigs. It turns out that many punks want collective gigs like they used to. Today many bands are growing outside Bandung too. We have performed on Road To Hellprint, and bands from rural Bandung have been very great, the quality is quite good.

MRR: If we talk about regeneration, at music festivals in Bandung many of the performers are big and famous bands. They often inhibit regeneration. How do you see the band regeneration in the Bandung scene?

Roma: What I have seen in recent years, as you say less regeneration, is felt in several ways. Indeed there are many new bands, but actually they are all long-time members of the community. What I have noticed, is that right now there are no bands that appear from high school students. Though now everything is easy, there are many ways to spread ideas, music and bands. But where are the high school students now? Whereas in the past, many of these students appeared and formed bands. For example in the *Panceg Dina Galur* death metal compilation in 2008, many high school student bands such as Disincarnation, Finger In The Throat, and Plasmoptysis.

It is precisely now that I am looking forward to the bands formed by current high school students. For example, this high school student band Voice of Baceprot from Garut (a 1.5 hour drive from Bandung).

MRR: What should be done to encourage this scene to revive, for new bands?
Arief: We must go back to making lots of collective gigs, micro-gigs, and studio shows that provide space for these new and small bands. And also, we have to approach the community to to organize to make DIY gigs for the student bands.

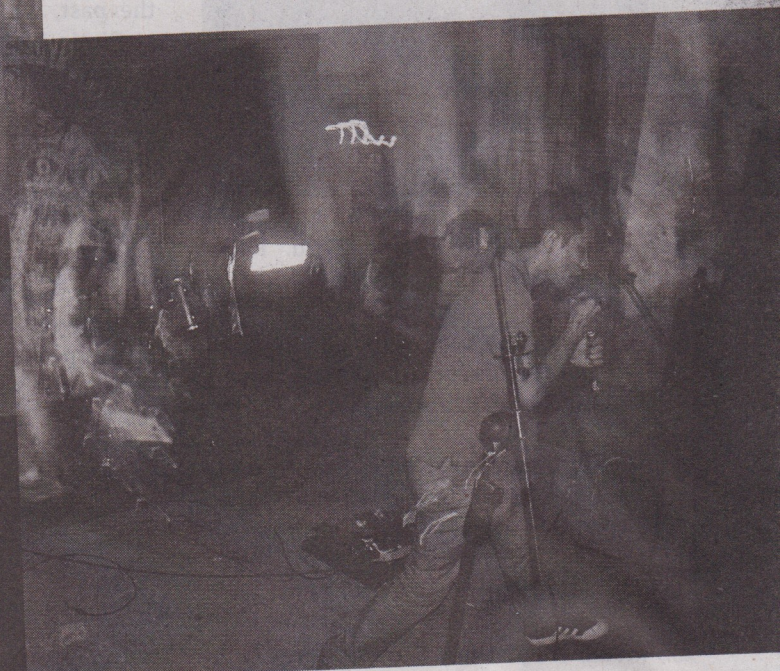


MRR: If we talk about commodification, many gigs and concerts are sponsored by the tobacco corporations. How do you see this corporate practice for new and small bands?
Arief: As long as there is no exploitation, just relax [*laughs*].
Roma: There will definitely be a reciprocal relationship. They need a promotional event. One of the targets is our independent community. We don't know whether they support music or not, we don't know. Our first show was on Road To Hellprint (a cigarette sponsored event), because at that time we didn't have an album and only had a few songs to play. It's a small event. We are happy, because they support new bands, because besides us, there were many new and small bands that also appeared. But if there is already a demand for capitalist standardization and huge audiences, that is what annoys us about the practices of such tobacco companies.

MRR: Is the existence of this cigarette corporation beneficial for new and small bands?
Roma: From our experience in Road To Hellprint, many of us started new bands, so in our opinion it was quite profitable. But, the community actually must be willing and able to organize gigs independently.

MRR: When talking about resistance, some communities finally make things collective, it turns out there's a problem of commitment necessary to continue this mutual cooperation and we need support from local brands. Can the existence of local brands such as Maternal Disaster and Bloods be a solution to this?
Arief: Business owners must have a passion to support these new bands. Like Maternal, because the owner also comes from an independent music community. The number of collective events is not profitable, but it still continues. Because if the community lives, the collective lives, it makes the bands enthusiastic too.

MRR: In the past few years in Bandung, the new bands have had to wait for years until they had a following and their album could be released. But now new bands release their album first, then gain some followers. How about yourself?



Arief: I've been playing in several bands for years but none of my bands have released an album. That's why when I have the opportunity now to immediately release an album, I just do it. We want the musicians to be more expressive and seek satisfaction from their music. Now making albums is also easier and cheaper than two decades ago because the technology is more affordable.
Roma: In my opinion, the three of us have experience playing in the band for more than seven years. In the past our mindset was just about playing in a band, liking the songs and wanting to perform, to release an album was very difficult and that was an achievement for us. It's been kind of an obsession since first playing in this band. We're saving our money for making this

record, and then we can finally release our album independently. I just want to pay off my previous bands because they only made some demo tapes.

MRR: When talking about regeneration, there are a lot of new bands but they are not offering new music. It's just like the band is new but the music is not much different from the existing hardcore punk genre. Do you think that feeling is stagnant?

Arief: Maybe many new bands like to stick to the roots. Because the roots of hardcore punk music in Bandung are oriented to New York, for example, many of them are like that. We love to experiment. That's why our music is freer, more experimental, doesn't want to be called punk, because we all like different music. So I put metal, stoner, ambient, crust punk, sludge, because I like a lot of music. I mixed it all together in Katastrov. Because I listen to bands from shoegaze to britpop, pop-punk, stoner, to metalcore. But the spirit is punk. In our community, our music is anomalous. Our music is said to be "atypical."
Roma: Why is it stagnant? Because of the audience there. Some people make music based on markets and trends only. So if you pay attention, collective gigs actually provide a lot of different and cool music, there are skramz, there are emo violence, etc. Compared to boring corporate festival events, because the music is just based on market trends.

MRR: Who are the references when you make this album?
Arief: If you talk to the band, it's a lot. But because I play guitar, I like At The Drive In, I like the style of Omar Rodriguez Lopez, Michael Enziger (Incubus), and Stephen Carpenter (Deftones), Tommy Victor (Prong), Paige Hamilton (Helmet), and Kevin Shields (My Bloody Valentine). If you noticed, on the intro of the song "Surga Imajiner" (Imaginary Heaven) I enter the jingle of a bread product. That's what I see from the technique of Kevin Shields who likes to play reverse delay.
Roma: My vocal character is more shouting than screaming. That's why our band is an anomaly. Because it's not guttural, it's screaming. So just let this be a kind of identity. This is the hallmark of Katastrov. For vocal style, I like Keith Buckley (Everytime I Die), Ian McKaye (Fugazi and Minor Threat), and Jacob Bannon (Converge). But for this album I often listen to old stuff from bands such as From Ashes Rise and Tragedy.

MRR: What is the song "Manusia" (Human) tells about?
Arief: I like cats and dogs, and on social media, I often see animal abuse. This song looks at animal-rights issues but from other perspectives.

MRR: There are lyrics of the song "Surga Imajiner" (Imaginary Heaven), which are very relevant to Indonesia's social conditions which are very risky with religious issues. What is the background for you to write lyrics like this?
Arief: The lyrics of this song are very "straight in your face." There were two friends who made us be careful when we chose the single "Surga Imajiner" (Imaginary Heaven), because it made us very vulnerable to fundamentalists. But the song has already been written. [*laughs*]
Roma: I remembered my band Idiosinkratis writing lyrics before we disbanded in 2014. So I made the tone first. I wanted to make the D-beat song experimentally, only made more clear, because the initial version was quite long. And finally it became the single we chose. At that time many groups were divided because of identity politics, especially during the 2014 Indonesia Presidential elections. I saw some social media wars between my friends just because of all the different views of religion and ideology, and some of them support violence and hoaxes. My statement in this song is clear: I don't support any religious bigotry. The funny thing is, they (the bigots) want to go to heaven. And many of our closest bands like Alice, Seringai and Homicide also make songs about the violence of fundamentalists. These issues are still relevant.

MRR: Are there fears when releasing this single against fundamentalists?
Arief: At first I didn't, but there were some friends who said things. But until now there is no threat. If so, this means that our lyrics are successful.
Roma: I have prepared the answer. What is the problem? Because the song's lyrics are very relevant to Indonesia's current social conditions that are so vulnerable to religion and identity politics. This song tells the story of someone who thinks they will go to heaven by killing the lives of other innocent people. And our lyrics do not include any particular religion or group. That can happen to anyone.

MRR: Do you think music has a role in providing an understanding of Indonesia's socio-political conditions that are so vulnerable to the issue of religious fundamentalism?
Arief: Our music talks to young people. We didn't want to change the world. But we do give a different perspective to be more tolerant and open-minded. There is nothing insulting, this album always critiques in good morality.
Roma: Yes, if the lyrics tell us something about the social or politics conditions in these places. Maybe it's not 100% true, but it makes a way to have some discussion. You can talk about everything in your music. Based on our experiences, music in a tool to share some ideas and opinions. Some musicians make songs based on their views about some social or political issues. So my goal is just to share some knowledge or my opinions to our listeners. ■

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Collected Lyrics
By Pete Shelley
Eyewear Publishing
240 pgs| $20

When I was young, about age thirteen, the world kissed me on the forehead, then laid on its back and opened its legs. I was astounded—the years leading up hadn't exactly prepared me for anything good, and then, in a flash, my world was lit by bright light. It was as if someone had hammered out a halos curve. Everything around me was touched by its brilliance; gray trees turned healthy green, the sky smiled, the earth—crackled.

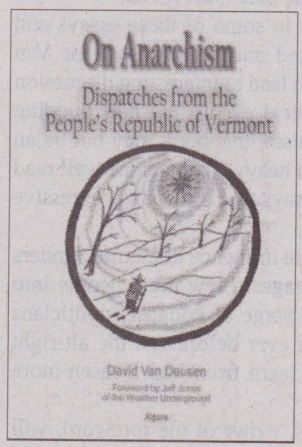
For the first time in my life, I had a lot of friends. I was obsessed with punk rock, crazy about it, I'd sit in my room and stare at my stereo. There was—there was a sort of magic about it, a magic which I'm very lucky to have felt. Sometimes now I feel like I'm dying like my insides are the same as the gunk in an ashtray after a hard rain. Music sounds like shit to me now. But back then I could hear whatever I wanted; like I said, the world was revealing itself to me, and one of the infinite forms that God took was in the form of Pete Shelley. Pete isn't God, but God is Pete, and God (who now despises me) kissed me on the mouth every time I heard the Buzzcocks. I didn't even hear them that often; my good friend Lis loved them, she was crazy about them and Devo, and my uncle adored them, but I in my tremendous stupidity was so enamored by everything that I took it all for granted. "Ever Fallen In Love (With Someone You Shouldn't've)", "I Don't Mind", "What Do I Get"...they penetrated me, helped me realize I would fall in love, they stepped on me with velvet shoes in the same way the Ramones and all the rest did.

Later, when I hit desolation, when hate stopped being a jokey watchword and instead filled every cell of mine, I couldn't listen to the Buzzcocks. I couldn't listen to much of anything—Television, maybe, or Pentangle, but nothing that had the sunshine the Buzzcocks did. The closest I could get was the Only Ones (an objectively superior band).

But Pete Shelley is dead, died right after I was assigned this book to review, and now here I am wondering what to say about his lyrics. They're fine. Most lyrics make lousy poetry, but Shelley was never trying to be a poet, just a pop singer (the Buzzcocks dialectic is this: Thesis = Pop/Antithesis = Punk/Synthesis = Buzzcocks) and they're pop lyrics. Good pop lyrics, mind you, pop lyrics that accompanied many of the best years of my life and likely yours as well, but pop lyrics nonetheless.

AH! But anyways! The world turned and turned! And here I am, 16 years later, in a chair with a ripped cushion in an office in a basement with two guns in it, and even though my body is obsolete, my lungs are black, the world is on fire—God's back, kissing me with tongue, which is only another way to say I'm listening to Pete Shelley's smash solo hit Homosapien, thumbing through this book that contains nothing but Pete Shelley lyrics—I mean really, almost nothing else, just a short preface & an introduction – and marveling at the beautiful past.

—BB



On Anarchism: Dispatches from the People's Republic of Vermont
By David Van Deusen
Algora Publishing, 2017
223 pages| $22.95

Reading this collection of essays, it's clear David Van Deusen has lived an interesting life. To start, Van Deusen takes us on an exciting history of his involvement in The Green Mountain Anarchist Collective. He writes about efforts against a racist group called The Minutemen and daily struggles of the organization. He introduces the question of violence and non-violence used as a tactic or strategy, a topic he goes into with detail later in the book.

Reading the first chapter on the history of Van Deusen and the collective he was part of does pull the reader into the book. Although the title may suggest more enjoyment for people from Vermont, the book still has lots to offer those who are not. The second set of essays focuses on theory, including two great reads "The Rise of Capitalism" and "Authoritarian Communism as An Incomplete Resistance". These two essays are written with pace and vigor sometimes lacking in other parts of the book. Some of the essays are so crammed with theories and ideas, I needed a rest between them to let it sink in. A nice touch here: Van Deusen intersperses the theories with song lyrics from the Who, the Clash, Public Enemy and many others; this helps the reader to digest the previous essay and get ready for the next.

Van Deusen describes some comprehensive tactics he has used in demonstrations; this chapter is extreme and made me wish there were more anarchists organizing themselves as he suggests. Although this section was first published in 2000, it's still relevant and hopefully, some folk will take note. He even compares the tactics of the US Army to what can be used on the streets. For your information, if there are over 1000 of you hitting the streets, keep a reserve of about 300 for emergency relief. This chapter has over 20 essays and ends with an account of a huge organized demonstration being postponed when the World Trade Center was attacked in September 2001.

The fourth chapter has essays under the heading *Organization*. There are more stories from Van Deusen's experiences; by this point,

you realize the guy has done a fair bit. He explores workers' councils and unions and looks at the difference between talking about them being valuable and the reality of starting one. Reading about bosses intimidating workers and capitalism generally making lives unhappy rings all too true of struggles around the world today. These ideas roll over to the following chapter, *Workers*. Van Deusen writes about starting a union and strategies to help workers. This is met with backlash from bosses who try to intimidate their workers who join. They use different tactics to respond, claiming some victories. These events take place in a small New England city, but the stories feel like a microcosm of larger systems. Tactics like filling diners with people only drinking coffee during peak dinner time do get a message across. It doesn't feel like this is being mirrored around the world and, on the grander scale, if only a few people boycott companies like Nestle, Amazon etc., the bosses will continue to exploit. But without a people like Van Deusen getting things started, of course, it would be even worse.

The final chapters of this book talk about the People's Republic of Vermont's 2007 secession from the state of Vermont and a story about a road trip to New Orleans. Van Deusen visits to assist/witness the aftermath of Katrina's destruction in 2005. A nice end to the book, a good one to read if you need to refresh the idea that ACAB.

Anarchists will certainly find interest in some of these essays and groups can learn from what has worked and what hasn't for Van Deusen. There are many points which can lead to interesting discussion in established groups, organizers of radical events and new budding anarchists. If completely new to Anarchism, this book may not be an ideal starting point; in parts, as it is quite heavy. To someone well read on the topic, there are certainly many essays that can coax progressive ways of thinking about Anarchy.

Although Van Deusen is yet to have the influence of Bernie Sanders in Vermont, let's hope this book encourages a few more people into direct action. Now the planet is on the verge of collapse, politicians have lost their people's faith more than ever before and the alt-right are gaining a voice, maybe it's time to learn from Van Deusen more than ever.

Hopefully, this quote from Jeff Jones, writer of the foreword, will give you an idea about the author and how the book is written, "David identifies as a revolutionary: that is, he believes in and works for a complete transformation of our society as presently constituted. What's more, he believes this transformation is possible."

So let's do it!

—Nik Ray

Contract In Blood:
A History of UK Thrash Metal
By Ian Glasper
Cherry Red Press, 2018
712 pages | £16.99

I've been reading Ian Glasper wrong for all these years.

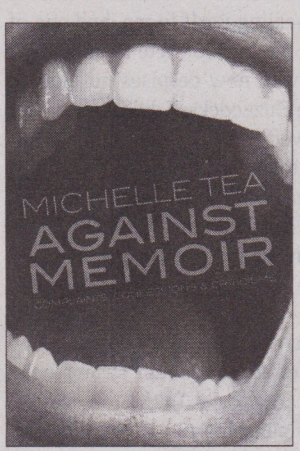
It's likely that you've seen some of his work before. Glasper authored the ridiculously exhaustive UK crust history *The Day The Country Died* and the equally thorough *Burning Britian*. If you read, or even leafed through, either of these, you know what you're getting in this new one: Glasper methodically interviews bands from the United Kingdom's thrash metal scene, unearths the stories of their recordings, lineup histories, connections to other acts and more. If you're a fan of the genre, you'll learn a bunch about your favorite bands; if you're a neophyte, your head will explode from all there is to learn.

That said, I haven't checked in with Glasper for more than ten years, so the way that I read and write has changed. To write, I need to be in a room with no internet connection. A bunch of writers (Zadie Smith, Jonathan Franzen) have remarked on how much easier it is to get work done without the internet in the same spot. I have the luxury—maybe the privilege—of owning an asthmatic desktop that remains unconnected to the world wide web. I'm on it as I write this. Similarly, I've noticed that reading is much easier in these situations: my hour or so of daily reading is aided by keeping my phone and laptop out of the room I'm in. It's kinda frightening how the presence of my phone can be distracting, even if I'm not on it.

Sometimes I take notes on one of the pads of paper that inevitably loses its way in my apartment. Of course, the particular pad with my Glasper notes vanished in the shuffle of the day-to-day, so I didn't initially go back to follow up on any of the bands he wrote about. This happens a lot: I hear about bands, movies, or TV shows, and intend to track them down, but there's such a barrage of media that I can't keep things straight unless I write everything down.

Finally, I decided that Glasper's book might be better read in the same room as an internet connection. This worked wonders: I was find bands down easily, adding resonance to the text. I'm not sure of Glasper's authorial intent, aside from recording as much information about all the bands in the UK thrash scene as possible. Ultimately, it doesn't matter whether Glasper intended readers to check out his book with internet handy or not. Maybe there are readers out there who are familiar enough with all these bands to read and retain the stories. Or maybe, like me, they choose instead to listen to snippets of each band presented over time, then jump back into favorites later to make the anecdotes herein more resonant. I love the idea of text as hypertext: the book as a jumping-off point. This is all a very (very) roundabout way of saying that devotees and acolytes both should find much to dig in *Contract In Blood*, a testament to Glasper's formidable skills as an interviewer and writer.

–Michael T. Fournier



Against Memoir:
Complaints, Confessions, & Criticisms
Michelle Tea
Feminist Press, 2018
302 pages | $12.88

Michelle Tea writes that sometimes the hardest part about being a woman is the inordinate pressure to be good at one's craft. Society allows male writers and musicians to fail spectacularly and publically time after time, gaining experience and wisdom in the process. Women do not have this luxury; they have the pressure of being representatives for their gender. This pressure deprives them of opportunities for growth. Over the course of a prolific career—she explains that writing has replaced her once-compulsive drinking—Tea has become what readers demand of any writer, no matter their gender: she's so damn good.

This book is not an autobiography but a collection of personal essays divided into three themes: art & music, love & queerness, and writing & life. The themes overlap, often revisiting the author's rocky but art-filled adolescence in the impoverished town of Chelsea, on Boston's North Shore. She battles a peeping tom stepfather, a mother who disapproves of her clown-white goth makeup, and targeted street

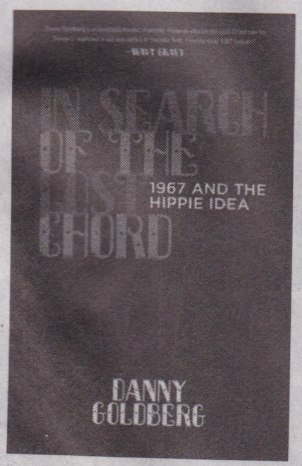
violence she experienced as a baby queer in an insular town.

The book opens with a series of essays on the artists and political figures who shaped her worldviews. Ironically, an essay on Valerie Solanas precedes one on Andy Warhol (the former non-fatally shot the latter after an artistic dispute). About Solanas, Tea says that "going totally fucking insane is a completely rational outcome for an intelligent woman in this society," a sentiment I find myself agreeing with more daily. While appreciative of their contributions to outsider culture and her own development, Tea does not ignore her influences' problematic elements. She criticizes Solanas' indisputable transphobia and Ian Mackaye's unwillingness to recognize his dismissal of white supremacy's legacy in "Guilty of Being White." She discusses the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival's exclusion of trans women. While she used to enjoy the festival yearly, she stopped attending after organizers refused to change their "womyn only" policy to include trans women. In the lengthy essay "Transmissions from Camp Trans," Tea produces a solid piece of journalism with personal insight on queer issues, such as the overshadowing of trans women in their own spaces and the fetishization of trans men by cisgender lesbians. For pages at a time, she hands the pen to trans women who provide their thoughts on the festival, the protest festival that arose in response, and trans exclusion in general. I appreciate her willingness to permit her subjects speak to speak for themselves, rather than interpreting their views and risking taking quotes out of context.

Queer and gender issues recur throughout the book. Tea laments the shortcomings of society's gender labels as she struggles to find the proper language to describe her gender nonconforming spouse. To illustrate the queer community 's discomfort around some of its own members, she writes a story about a formerly lesbian-identified queer woman and her trans man partner. The couple goes to a gay bar, once a refuge, and feels uncomfortable and unwanted, perceived as tourists taking up space. San Francisco's lesbian punk gang, HAGS, receives a loving eulogy in the book's longest essay. The HAGS were misfits from troubled homes who banded together to bash back at homophobia and sexism. Many of them died broke and alone in the 90s, but Tea revives them as larger-than-life antiheroes, imbuing the piece with the wide-eyed admiration she held for the gang as a San Francisco queer youth during their heyday.

The book ventures into the meta in the last piece, the title essay "Against Memoir," in which she talks about the vanity, social recklessness, and existential despair that compel her to write. Hypergraphia is the medical term for the symptom of excessive writing. Tea loves her hypergraphia, even as she embarrasses herself when friends find themselves in her work. Is the compulsion to write part of an existential need to give one's life a sense of reason and narrative flow? If so, Tea does it masterfully.

—Caitlin Xavier



In Search Of the Lost Chord: 1967 and the Hippie Idea
Danny Goldberg
Akashic Books, 2018
358 pages | $16.95

Growing up in the 1970s and 1980s, I had (and maintain) a bit of animosity toward hippies. When I learn of interesting things that were happening in the '60s, I am unable not to filter it through my experience of the '70s and '80s, when hippies had sold out their ideals and were reduced to a punchline. Even as I get older and understand things more thoroughly, that cynicism remains. People for whom the 1960s were the most important decade seem to feel a need to remind everyone that it was. *In Search Of The Lost Chord: 1967 and the Hippie Idea* has such a perspective.

Author Danny Goldberg graduated high school in New York City and started attending college at the University of California in Berkeley in 1967. That year was momentous for him. *In Search Of The Lost Chord: 1967 and the Hippie Idea* is his personal history of the year. He writes about the people and events which made an impression on him at the time, and their intersections with his life. The book simply summarizes these events. Like most of the people who were "there," Goldberg upholds the belief that the '60s were the most special time. I agree that some important ideas floated around and some attitudes have changed as a result. But looking back, these social changes had little political impact. The decade still begat the '70s with Nixon, all the corruption of the '80s, and on and on through to the stuff we have today. While Goldberg acknowledges this as well, he still remains unyielding in his belief in the "hippie idea."

Goldberg states at the beginning of *In Search Of The Lost Chord: 1967 and the Hippie Idea* that the book is by no means a complete history of 1967. His 1967 starts with the Human Be-In in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park on January 14. The various factions of the scene agreed to get together for the occasion. It had the makings of a great event. There were political activists, anti-war crusaders, acid freaks, love children, musicians, The Diggers, sympathetic beatniks and others. Unfortunately, as Goldberg points out, every group had its own agenda and regarded each other's sincerity and methods with skepticism. These contradictions and in-fighting would impede any progress that might possibly have been made throughout the year.

In Search Of The Lost Chord: 1967 and the Hippie Idea is as scattered in its subjects as a seventeen-year-old mind would probably have been at the time. Certain subjects provoke interest, but Goldberg does not delve deeply into any of them. He covers LSD, underground and mainstream media, the anti-war movement, the Civil Rights movement, politics, spiritualism and music, among other topics. Connections are made and paths are crossed. Naiveté and idealism and pave the way for undesirable interlopers and mainstream contempt. San Franciscans even try, unsuccessfully, to declare the death of the hippy in 1967.

The title *In Search Of The Lost Chord: 1967 and the Hippie Idea* is intentionally misleading. Goldberg uses the chord analogy to indicate 1967's reverberations, but he discusses music in only one chapter. He avoids meaningful commentary about the era's music, making insipid comments such this, about the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band*: "I have nothing to add to the thousands who have analyzed the album's music." Goldberg was a music critic, record label executive, and band manager, so perhaps his immersion in the music biz has dulled his feelings.

As a historical document, *In Search Of The Lost Chord: 1967 and the Hippie Idea* is a gripping introduction to the events of 1967, with descriptions of compelling characters, and both uplifting and tragic events. Hopefully, the stories introduced in *In Search Of The Lost Chord: 1967 and the Hippie Idea* will lead you to more in-depth and varied history books and perspectives on the era.

—Carolyn Keddy

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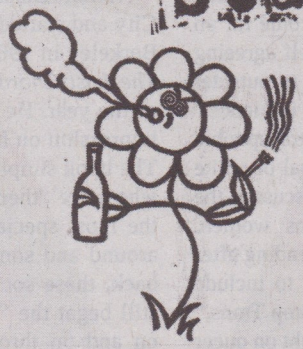

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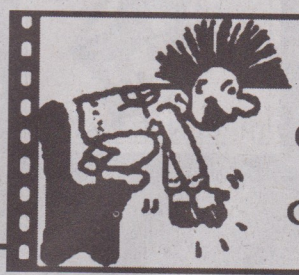

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

We are always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let us know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. We will go see it.

In 2019 it can be difficult to remember the days when simply being a punk was considered a threat to the average person. We see punks in commercials and regular people dye their hair bright colors and wear ripped clothes and whatnot. Then I see **Negro Terror** a documentary about an African American punk band of the same name from Memphis, TN. Everything about that description conjures up certain images. Depending on who you are, they could be considered a threat.

Negro Terror's singer and bassist Omar explains the concept of Negro Terror. Elvis Presley and Buddy Holly were considered negro terror because they played rock'n'roll music. He mentions that moving into a white neighborhood and watering his lawn could also be considered negro terror. It is a provocative name backed up with intelligence, understanding and the desire to change the course of the world. However, intellectual concepts can only get a band so far. The band also needs to be good and entertaining so that people want to see them and listen to their music. Negro Terror is.

The three members of Negro Terror are quite different. Omar is the leader. He is a skinhead who has been in the punk scene since the '80s. Guitarist Rico has played in rock bands, but has not been involved in the punk. Drummer Ra'id has not played this type of music before. His family doesn't even know he is in a punk band. Yet they all are inspired by the same ideas to play music together. It works.

Negro Terror does not avoid controversy. Not surprisingly they court it. Omar recalls that he heard some Skrewdriver fan spout that no one could do a better version of their song "Invasion". Omar immediately wanted to show them Negro Terror could. So they did. Rico made a video for their version incorporating images that showed the reality of African American life emphasizing police harassment flipping the meaning of the song. Needless to say the racist Skrewdriver fans went crazy. Then Negro Terror doubled down with another Skrewdriver cover updated to "Voice of Memphis". If you want to stick it to the nazi punks, using Skrewdriver always seems to be the easiest way.

Director John Rash is taking the film **Negro Terror** on an East Coast tour this spring. Negro Terror the band will be along to perform a live score for the screenings. Check out the website for tour dates. (southdocs.org/project/negroterror)

The documentary title **Bathtubs Over Broadway** is amusing enough. Writer for the *Late Night With David Letterman* show Steve Young has an odd obsession. He collects broadway style musical albums made by corporations about the products they sell. Huh? That's a thing? **Bathtubs Over Broadway** is the story of how this came about and what happens when your seemingly silly interests collide with the real world.

Young was asked to go to a record store and pick up some records for a show segment called "Dave's record collection." He was looking for ones that would get an easy laugh and started stumbling upon these corporate records. He would buy them for the show, but soon started listening to them and enjoying it. He began to collect them for himself and as a result meet other collectors.

"The Bathrooms Are Coming" is his all time favorite. His daughters appear in **Bathtubs Over Broadway** laughing that they always thought he made up "The Bathrooms Are Coming". They thought it was a family joke. When *Late Night With David Letterman* was coming to an end, Young, who proclaims he had no hobbies and few friends outside of the show, crossed over from record collector to scholar of these industrial musicals. He tracks down the people who wrote, scored, directed, produced and performed in these musicals. He became friends with them.

Bathtubs Over Broadway is a sweet and humorous story. There is also a subtle political commentary involved with the story. These musicals were made to inspire employees to work hard for the company and want to be involved with it long term. The corporations seemed to want this too. It is a different attitude from today's corporate America where it seems the workers' happiness and well-being matter the least. The shareholders get all the money and the perks while the people who keep the company going are merely tolerated.

A bonus for me as a fan of *Late Night With David Letterman* was some behind the scenes stuff of the show as it was ending in 2015. **Bathtubs Over Broadway** follows Young around as he packs up his stuff to leave the studio. You see the set being dismantled and people moving out. There are just little tidbits, but it was a nice coda to one of my favorite shows. (bathtubsoverbroadway.com)

Half way between a sweet story and a depressing one is **Happy As Lazzaro**. A film set in rural Italy where a poor extended family begin by celebrating the engagement of a young couple. The male serenades the woman while enduring the taunts of her sisters. It is announced that the new couple will move to the city to see if they can find a better life. The family immediately attempts to discourage the move.

Happy As Lazzaro focuses on the day to day experiences of this family. They are tobacco farmers working for Alfonsia de Luna, known unaffectionately as the "Queen Of Cigarettes". Although the family survives without most modern conveniences and money, seemingly living in another decade, they get along and are happy. That all changes when de Luna shows up for a visit with her bratty son Tancredi. Tancredi is a spoiled brat who befriends the title character farm worker Lazzaro. Lazzaro is taken advantage of by his family and other farm workers. Tancredi also takes advantage of Lazzaro.

Happy As Lazzaro could go in a predictable way, but it doesn't. The film makes a shocking turn midway. Tancredi's selfishness changes the lives of the entire group of workers. They are released from their unlawful servitude and relocated to the city. It is an interesting and thoughtful reflection on the realities and inequalities of modern life. Lazzaro remains innocent throughout. (netflix.com)

As you probably have heard *Maximum Rocknroll* is no longer going to be printing a physical magazine after May 2019. It is a crushing economic reality, but *MRR* will continue in other engaging ways. I have been writing this film column for over twenty years and I hope to continue doing so in the new era. In the meantime, I will be revitalizing my neglected website carolynkeddy.com and posting as many of my columns there as possible with some new stuff too. Here's to the future!

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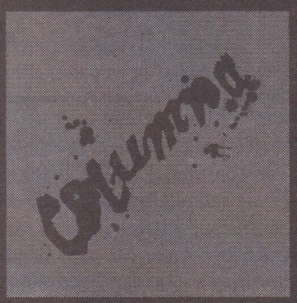

Las Cosas Que Perdemos LP

ALSO NEW

Neighborhood Brats - Claw Marks LP
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Allvaret - Skam Och Skuld LP
Corner Boys - Love Tourist 7"
Chain Whip - Chain Whip 7"

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(CR) Camylle Reynolds
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(KK) Kenny Kaos
(LG) Layla Gibbon
(MA) Matt Badenhop
(MC) Mitch Cardwell
(MF) Miranda Fisher
(MR) Matt Reynolds
(PA) Pete Avery
(RK) Ramsey Kanaan
(RL) Ray Lujan
(RS) Ramy Silyan
(WN) Robert Collins

ANNÉES ZÉRO – "Nique" EP

Heavy hardcore punk with a bit of a creepy deathrock undertow. Growly vocals, accented with reverb, drive the songs with unstoppable energy and there are enough intelligible riffs and dynamic changes to keep things interesting. This record expands on what could easily be a formula for punk songs—short, angry verses over repeating guitar chord progressions—but it is so much more than that. Incorporating the occasional melodic, chorus-drenched guitar lead or unusual rhythm changes brings in a ton of nuance and keeps it sounding exciting and fresh. Recommended. Record comes with cool fold-out poster artwork. (HB)
(Destructure / No Glory)

ARROTZAK – "-" LP

A beautiful and dreary sounding punk trio from San Sebastián. It's the rhythmic insistence of the ESTRANGED and grand choruses of LA URSS rolled into one. There's no shortage of contemporary "dark punk," and while my tendency is to move on, hearing bands like ARROTZAK keeps my dismissal in check. They write really great songs with depth but that move quickly...you know, like a punk band, not a punk band trying to sound like a goth band. Lyrics are in Spanish and Basque and translated into English, and while full of despair they convey self-reflection and ultimately hope, rather than defeat or other superficial "dark" themes. It's a really fine release, and I can sense the passion poured into it. I shared a stage with them last spring in Zarautz and they were both a great live band and genuinely friendly and welcoming guys—true punx. (MA)
(Cementerio / DMDF / No Thanks)

BABY'S BLOOD – "Everybody Looks Like A Fucking Idiot" EP

Four songs of nasty, bad attitude rock courtesy of DREW OWEN and his Finnish compatriots. I thought the quality of life was better there. Why so pissed off? It's fast and furious sped-up thrashy garage punk. It's ugly, mean, and even a bit funny. Right, "Sex Punk"? (CK)
(Neck Chop)

BAD BAD – "Another Insect Bite" EP

BAD BAD's LP from a little while ago was nice low wattage psych, but that's all been pulled away here. Behind the curtain is a smoldering shithole of dumpster electronics and weirdo punk. Sometimes like DEVO when they first discovered synths, other times turning darker, like CHROME but nerds, the songs here are sharp and catchy and careful. It sounds wrecked, but it's never haphazard. There's a certain precision in not sounding precise, and BAD BAD has absolutely, truly perfected that sound on this EP. BAD BAD, please make twenty more records that sound just like this one. I will never get enough. (MR)
(Pocket Producer)

BAD MOJOS – "I Hope You OD" CD

Judging this band by its cover and its label I was expecting a bluesy garage band. BAD MOJOS are poppy punk with buzzsaw guitars, and a vocalist that sounds like that guy from the SPITS. It's high energy and every song is under two minutes. (CK)
(Voodoo Rhythm)

BEN EDGE & THE ELECTRIC PENCILS – LP

I'm not even sure what an electric pencil is, but I feel like I owe it to these guys to find out. They start off strong with a catchy power pop number, heavy on the pop. Musically it's solid, but also fairly straightforward. The focus is definitely on the catchy melodies and the vocals. The record continues this way. It's mid-tempo and infectious throughout. Ben's got a solid voice that sometimes borders on pretty. Don't get me wrong, this isn't a *pretty* pop record, it's a *power* pop record with vocals that are solid. I'd go out of my way to find this one. (KK)
(Almost Ready / One Man Movement)

BITEMARKS – "Sucia" LP

While knowing that BITEMARKS has folks from older Florida bands such as TRUE NORTH and PALATKA might not give you a full picture of this band, it does work as a starting point. It has a similar feel to those '90s No Idea post-hardcore bands in that it's aggressive and punchy but catchy and melodic without sounding cheesy or boring. Where this differs is that it is a little more straightforward, a little more rock, and the vocals are snotty and in your face. It's like if one of those Chris Thompson bands had guitars that are big and heavy sounding rather than that noodly stuff. Top it off with a full sounding recording, and you have a record that really smokes, even if it is only single sided. (PA)
(Belladonna)

BITTER AND ABUSIVE LANGUAGE – "II" CD

Fukkn brutal stench. No nuance here, no subtleties and no bullshit

whatsoever, just ramshackle D-beat presented with no apologies, and it's ugly as shit. Full endorsement. (WN)
(self-released)

BOOJI BOYS – "Unknown Pleathers" EP

You ever see a band at bookstore, and the PA is meant for poetry? So you can't hear the vocals, and you still are jamming hard as fuck? That's this shit right here. Like this vibe is so strong, I actually feel like I just finished a forty listening to this. Fuzzed *the fuck* out and slamming around. Sounds that make the body loose. The grooves are tight and keep driving shit forward, and the lead guitar and vocals throw in some spice to keep you guessing. Low fidelity, high quality punk right here, and it has nothing to do with JOY DIVISION. (HK)
(Sewercide)

BRAIN EATERS – "Bad Girls Motorcycle Gang from Tokyo" 10"

A male rockabilly band from Paris posing as a Japanese girl gang and starting their 10" off with a song called "Lobo Loco." There are some contradictions happening on this record. The music is straight ahead rockabilly. It's well played and all that, but they need to figure out who they are. (CK)
(Fuck U)

BUCKET FLUSH / MUD SEX – split EP

I think you would call MUD SEX garage punk thrash. They like rock'n'roll, but they play it too fast, like a blurry headache. From West Philly, and with an epic YouTube documentary for those who care. BUCKET FLUSH play very fast hardcore punk: they sound like a band off the MASTER TAPE comp or some such, and apparently like ROLLINS-era FLAG, and sing about giving drugs to kids in the park. Six songs on an EP seems somewhat admirable compared to what I usually have to review. (GB)
(WereOpossum)

BUTCHER – "Return to Nothingness" LP

BUTCHER's second LP is harrowing chaos on overdrive. Jack Butcher snarls forth with a clear yet grizzly delivery, at times bringing Rob "The Baron" Miller of AMEBIX, or intense black metal straining to mind, while still retaining hardcore razor cuts. The guitar intros are metallic and extremely accomplished, and at times melancholic post-punk vibes are mixed with discordant blackened chamber metal. Everything is much faster than you even need or expected. "Beyond the Triple World" is my favorite track, with well-placed mid-tempo bludgeoning. The lyrics are formulated into mystical analogies and spiritual perditions, which resist the power of evil, though embrace its existence, expressed through words that are wholeheartedly nihilistic and minimal, while at once fluid and existentially vast. "Beware The Gnawing Nothingness" is especially poignant and depressing. Featuring members of FORWARD, WORLD BURNS TO DEATH, ASSHOLEPARADE, and LIFECHAIN, and with calamitous cover art by the uncompromising Tomohiro Matsuda. And just like that, it ends like a cleaver to the skull. Darker, denser, and even deeper than the debut. Get this. (JR)
(Desolate)

BUTTERSCOTCH STANLEY – "Maybe I'll Move" CD

Punky indie rock from New York. Mid-tempo stuff that has a TOO MUCH JOY, ARCHERS OF LOAF, and even WEEZER feel. Lyrically they are witty and funny, and the vocals can get slightly off-key. This was OK, but that's about it. (RL)
(self-released)

CHANDRA – "Transportation" 2xLP

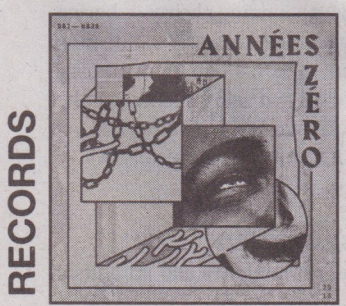
I first heard of CHANDRA at the height of the *Making Waves* zine / tumblr explosion of about ten years ago, when all these cool girl-punk sound detectives started finding all these wild *Subnormal Girls*-style musics from 1977 onward. The first two CHANDRA EPs were reissued on a 12" a while ago, but this is a deluxe reissue, remastered with two extra tracks, and anyone who would begrudge a super sick twelve-year-old girl circa 1981 fronting a no wave art punk downtown NYC group a deluxe reissue is a brain-free freak. The gatefold has a bunch of absolutely incredible images of CHANDRA performing and just being a kid, which is almost worth the price of admission. The music is dense paranoid art school wave, the sound of a band who would play the Mudd Club and The Kitchen. The lyrics are mean and cool like twelve-year-old girls and like NYC. Prior to writing about the nausea of riding the subway and girls called Kate, Chandra wrote songs about climbing out of a 60ft window and throwing babies in the trash! The music is truly the sound of downtown NYC, the backing band were previously released by John Cale's own label. The second EP was recorded by an all-teenage band after a show Chandra performed where the audience was made up of her peer group, and it was clear that was the answer! It has a cooler, more lo-fi feel, punker. The unreleased songs are truly incredible and totally worth the price, paranoid lofi synth-punk for the ages! Beyond perfect. Buy or die. All teenage girls in bands now. (LG)
(Telephone Explosion)

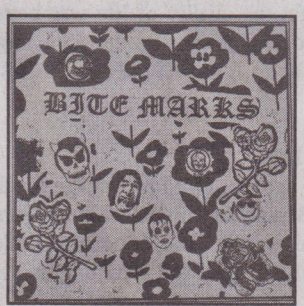
CELEBRITY HANDSHAKE – "Political Future" EP

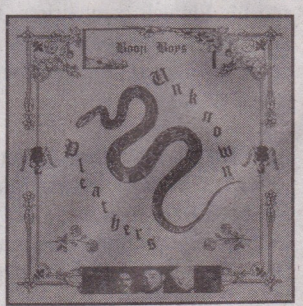
These guys have a crazy rambling-shouting singer named Hot Dog Haines. He probably needs hospitalization, unless this is part of his therapy. He is from the great white Maine, so maybe this is just normal sounding for there. Their frittered noise rock sounds fitting. CRAMPS or such. Numbered out of 200 copies. (GB)
(Eastern Prawn)

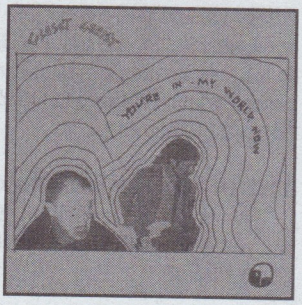
C.H.E.W. – "Feeding Frenzy" LP

Finally, an LP from Chicago's best recent hardcore export! There's something incredible about the way that they seamlessly incorporate rhythm / tempo changes and dissonance into their lightning fast riffs. How the fuck do they do it? Every listen has left my mouth agape, every track feels like it could be an example in a class on how to write a great hardcore song (even the dirges). An incredible record—I can't wait for the next one. (JD)
(Iron Lung)









THE CIA – LP

This doesn't sound "influenced" by anything, it doesn't seem like a replicant band idea or a recreation of a desired era—it seems more like a combination of people (from VIAL, TY SEGALL BAND and CAIRO GANG) that decided to make a total sound. Denee's vocals definitely make the band: she has a classic, savage style that will make you dream of PENELOPE HOUSTON and DINAH CANCER, but with the fury of watching the SCREAMERS' *Target Video*. The aesthetic of total devastation. I was a huge fan of her last band VIAL, who were truly incredible live, so I was really excited for this record. Watching them play last month was killer, and I would say if you have a chance to do so, take it! That experience gave different meaning to this record, which upon initial listen did not enthrall me totally. The bass-only attack made me think of that '90s Touch and Go style, or maybe GODHEADSILO. But at any rate, I think the live experience altered my perception of the record. (LG)
(In the Red)

CLOSET CHRIST – "You're In My World Now" EP

Raw and demented thrash by some chap named Brendan. Six short, rapid spurts of venomous hardcore with a home-recording charm, and all the sounds just right. The occasional guitar line is whammy-bar'd, twisted at the end, and wrung out like mutant piss-soaked drawers. Think Oslo's NEGATIV, but faster and more reckless. Only thing that would make this better is if it was twice as long, since there's definitely room on the wax. (MA)
(Lumpy)

COLUMNA – "Las Cosas Que Perdemos" LP

Spanish punks offer a fresh take on post-punk (minus the flanger) that is heavily based on pop, but never really dredges too deep into either side of the divide. Devoid of any tinges of goth and cleanly recorded, COLUMNA have a continuum of bangers that keeps *Las Cosas Que Perdemos* churning, and upbeat. RATA NEGRA with a tinge of ÖTZI but perhaps more polished. (CR)
(Dirt Cult / Last Hour / Sabotage)

COMBATANT – "Witness to Destruction" LP

It's not everyday you hear a DISCHARGE-influenced band from the northeasternmost state. Aside from the DIS-structures and phrasing, COMBATANT's tough barraging sound and burly vocals had me reminiscing about getting the first CAUSTIC CHRIST EP in the mail, or maybe a little bit of DEATHREAT? I like the urgency and the impact, but there are really no deep cuts. The lyric sheet is hard as balls to read, but they seem to address typical atrocities like war, drug addiction, war, dehumanization, and war. Same nine tracks on 45 on both sides. (MA)
(Not Like You)

THE COMPLICATORS – "Too Old" flexi

One-song, flexi single with the chorus *"I am too fucking old / and I don't care."* It's your basic ANTI-NOWHERE LEAGUE-style street punk. If you're into this band, just buy the split EP with EMPIRE DOWN, which also has this song on it. (AT)
(Pirates Press)

DEAD ALREADY – "Gilded Age of Piss" EP

Australian US hardcore band, if you know what I mean (you probably do). Ostensibly pulling from the '80s, but the herky-jerk tempo changes and hyper-political lyrics make it sound like its really pulling from that part of the '90s that was pulling from the '80s. This record I am presently reviewing is not super well-executed, but it does have a wide-eyed exuberance that I cherish and that is increasingly refreshing in this dark, dark age. (MR)
(self-released)

DEAD HUNT – LP

Oh great, another band that couldn't exist without TRAGEDY. Not much stands out from the rest of the crust herd here, but nothing is awful either. Vocals are nice and aggressive, the production approaches stadium crust levels of cleanliness and loudness, and the riffs themselves are not terribly generic, but not super unique either. The best part of this record is the guitar leads, most of which sound like they were aped from IRON MAIDEN or something. Probably a better live band. (JD)
(Black Water)

THE DEAD MORTICIANS – "Burial At Sea" CD

From Milwaukee, WI, the unfortunately-named DEAD MORTICIANS deliver some kind of nautical-horror themed metal. It's good for a laugh and some air guitar, and they're obviously having a blast, so good for them. Best song title: "Inconsequential Cataclysm." (MA)
(Burial Vault)

DEODORANT – "Smells Good" LP

This starts out on a cool note with some amateurish Joe Meek / *The Ventures Play Telstar* sort of thing. That all changes pretty quickly when the record cuts straight to an aggressive funk / punk, quirky MINUTEMEN-style of tune. It jumps around a bit after that. There's a little bit of plodding JFA style stuff. There are some faster three-chord songs that sound like if your first punk band actually knew how to play. What holds it all together is that it all sounds angry and very much like the 1980s (also that it goes back to that intro thing at the end). (PA)
(Not Normal)

DES DEMONAS – "Bay of Pigs" EP

The slinky '60s organ on this will make you cry 96 tears, the rhythm section has a collapsing beat that almost feels like watching a movie about mechanical failure, the repetition inherent in the sound is hypnotic and eternal… and the vocals add to this mystery. Recommended for demanding cultists and mindless transcendentalists. (LG)
(Slovenly)

DEWAERE – "Slot Logic" LP

The record kicks off sounding a little like a loungey take on the

MISFITS, and then moves into heavy rock with theatrical vocal delivery somewhat in the vein of the STROKES. The entire recording is drenched in a heavy coating of static fuzz and reverb. It's big and dirty and you probably know if that's the kind of thing that gets you going. (HB)
(Bigoût / Phantom)

THE DI MAGGIO CONNECTION – "Rowdy" CD

This is '50s style rock'n'roll. It is well played and by the books. I'll see you at the next sock hop. (CK)
(Area Pirata)

DIRECT HIT – "Crown of Nothing" CD

Never heard of these chaps before this disc, though apparently it's their second full-length. What it does remind me of, most muchly, is the LILLINGTONS's *Stella Sapiente* record. Both bands have some pedigree as pop punkers (the LILLINGTONS a bit longer, obviously), both are "concept" albums (still a rarity in punk rock, for better or worse), and on both records, they respectively take the pop punk genre and really reshape, expand, and redefine it. Throwing in lots of (darker) new wave stylings, and a whole host of other sounds and influences. Both are really fucking good. (RK)
(Fat Wreck)

DIRTY WORK – "In the West End" LP

This record is sort of paint-by-numbers street punk / Oi!; it reminds me of a cross between the CASUALTIES and LAST RESORT. There's a cover of "Gang Warfare" by the STRIKE, which appeared on the notorious *Strength Thru Oi!* comp. That song has the C-word in it, and though I understand that word is used more freely in other parts of the world, I cringe when I hear men say it in punk songs in 2019. I wasn't really into the record to begin with, and that made me turn it off. The riff on "Steel Toes" is kinda cool. (AT)
(Food Waste)

DISSEKERAD – "Domenatten" EP

Supergroup of sorts featuring members of BRAINBOMBS, AVSKUM, TOTALITÄR, and a buncha other Swede greats. Unfortunately this lil EP is nowhere near as exciting as any of those bands, but it's not a total waste. The riffs hold this back—I coulda sworn I've heard them on a couple of dozen records before this one! The redeeming grace is Poffen's incredible voice, still snarling and snapping with the same desperation and fury he had decades ago. Despite that, this record is still pretty forgettable. (JD)
(Varning)

D.N.A. – "Retrospective" CD

Retrospective comprises all of this guttural Swedish D-beat band's output. They have the vibe of early ANTI-CIMEX and the heaviness of SVART PARAD or BOMBANFALL, with funks-not-dead baselines that come to the forefront, and some slower-knuckle dragging ghostly rhythms as well. Think ATTACK SS, late-era RUDIMENTARY PENI, or even RADIO BIRDMAN, with macabre twists, turns, and gothic mangel. They cover "Green Onions," for crying out loud. And the hardcore parts are raging. Not-as-talked-about '80s Swedish skit punkers, but certainly recommended. (JR)
(Black Konflik)

THE EJECTOR SEATS – "Blueprint for a Miserable Existence" LP

Dirty rock'n'roll that ranges between punk parts and poppy riffs. Pretty standard tape machine fuzz with a garage pop vibe throughout. The songwriting varies quite a bit and new sounds are introduced once in a while, which keeps you listening. If this is your thing then go for it, but there's nothing too gripping for me here. (HK)
(Collision Course)

EKE BUBA – "Shut Up" EP

Holy shit, this record. I mean...whoa. Like early Boston hardcore but tougher and faster and my face is fukkn melting. Like this is perfect early '80s USHC but better and from 2018 and from Croatia, and this is also quite possible the single most crucial record in *MRR* this month. Been a long time since this old man has been this floored, highest recommendation for fans of punk (that means all readers). (WN)
(Lumpy)

EXTENDED HELL – "Call of the Void" EP

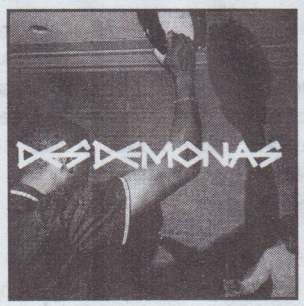
Play loud! Megaton hardcore punk outta New York with Scandi tendencies, highlighted by the tough vocals and intense but focused drum attack. TOTALITÄR are an obvious primary influence, but there are moments here that line up very well with early TRAGEDY in terms of the expansiveness of the sound and the riffing. Couple the quality tunes with a very well-designed sleeve (that cover art is downright haunting) and a huge, warm recording, and you've got a top-quality punk record. (AU)
(Desolate)

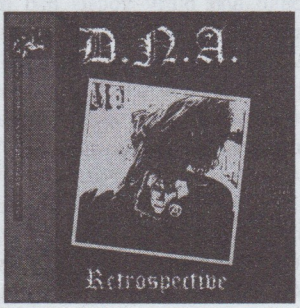
FANCY – "Pick Up" EP

Straight *fire* from Texas. Guitars tweaked just so, and the toughest kind of hate flowing through the microphone, FANCY gets straight to business and kicks out four on the floor hardcore in the fukkn teeth on their debut slab—it's just timeless hardcore punk. The moment when "Bubble" slows down is absolute magic, and then that snarl ushers in the EP's only down moment, and if you aren't moshing then you're maybe dead. This one is in league with the big dogs. SPAZM 151 and POISON IDEA-caliber hardcore offered with the highest recommendation. Killer. (WN)
(Mastermind)

500 MILES TO MEMPHIS – "Blessed Be The Damned" CD

Never heard of these folks before, and this is their fifth full-length in the last fifteen or so years. 500 MILES TO MEMPHIS definitely have the instrumentation on occasion: pedal steel, mandolin, and banjo, together with the wall of rock sound. I'm always a bit suspicious of bands that try and meld roots / folk music with punk rock. I think it works best when they stick to the more "regular" albeit punk stuff (though I am a sucker for the layered gospel choir vocal effects). There





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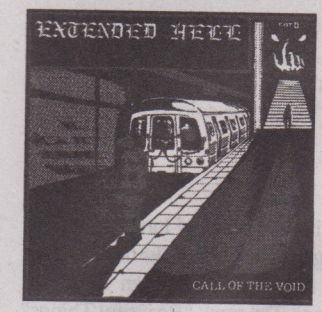


are a couple of songs that I'm sure SOCIAL DISTORTION could fit right into their current set. Not terrible by any means, and the lads can certainly play. (RK)
(self-released)

FORWARD – "Apathy Kills People" EP

Tokyo's kings are still...well, they are still kings. Two more tracks of fierce, positive, life-affirming Japanese hardcore. A mid-tempo A-side with a chorus just begging for crowd participation (the songs are completely different, but I'm reminded of the times I've seen audiences competing with the PA during the chorus in "What's The Meaning Of Love?") gives way to an absolute burner in "Our World Our Own," injecting raw JapanCrust fury into the anthemic hardcore that has become FORWARD's signature over the last two decades. Ishiya's vocals are gravel and fire, Souichi is still a fukkn animal, while You and Akiyama still manage to feel loose as fukk while remaining rock solid. FORWARD is very, very close to the perfect hardcore punk band, and this record (along with the full-length in the last issue) show that they have no intention of letting up. (WN)
(Black Water)

GELD – "Soft Power" EP

Horrifyingly psychedelic, raw punk madness out of Melbourne, Australia. It's like tearing out my brain in chunks with over the top, effected noise, then ripping those chunks to pieces with some shredding guitar solos. This is might be what FLIPPER would sound like if they were a really pissed off D-beat band, and could actually play their instruments. If you're looking to live the chaos, look no further. (BA)
(Iron Lung)

GINO AND THE GOONS – "She Was Crushed" EP

Another great record from GINO AND THE GOONS. I'm even saying that with a skronking sax blasting in the first few seconds of "She Was Crushed." Sax jokes aside, this EP contains four cool garage punk smashers. Catchy and fun danceable tunes for jumping around and spilling your beer. Oh yeah. (CK)
(Black Gladiator / Slovenly)

GLEN SCHENAU – "Phantom Vibration / Canovee"

Helter skelter demented anti-pop here from this Aussie alum of KITCHEN'S FLOOR and others. Potentially inspired by the more off-kilter C86 noise perpetuated by the likes of STUMP, BOGSHED, BIG FLAME, DAWSON, and the like; Decidedly non-trad but bursting with ideas and interesting sounds. (AM)
(self-released)

HAND GRENADES – "Demos to London" 12"

Incredible reissue of a 1979 7" with two extra unreleased tracks. The title track is absolutely incendiary: wild tense DIY skree that yes has some SWELL MAPS tones, but is probably one of the coolest *Wanna Buy a Bridge*-y songs I have heard. Anarchic nervous energy captured so totally: the guitar sound is perfect, otherworldly somewhere between an alarm and some ENO sound effect, then the way the rhythm section sort of rumbles and shambles creates this total sound of claustrophobia and freedom. How do you even do that all at once??? The vocalist sorta hits that HOMOSEXUALS note in a way you won't be able to stop consuming. It's wild how English this sounds for a NYC band, it just doesn't sound like their contemporaries at all to me? But the first song sorta makes me think of a photo of the Lower East Side circa 1980, so what do I know. Just a total magic snapshot of one of the coolest sounds created in the wake of punk! The unreleased songs are incredible. (LG)
(Last Laugh)

HOLLY GOLIGHTLY – "Do the Get Along ..." CD

My favorite style of HOLLY! The cool '60s garage / girl group update with her untouchable vocals! The title track is beyond.., I spent my teenage years going to see THEE HEADCOATEES every month at various pubs in North London and having to leave before they finished playing because of having to get the goddamn last train! A true and total psycho fan, I own most all the solo records by each HEADCOATEE, but I sorta petered off with HOLLY GOLIGHTLY partly because of budgetary concerns (she has a lot of records my friends!), but also because she went country blues in a way that was a little dull to these ears at least. On the evidence of this and the last LP, she is *back* where we want her to be*!* We meaning me! This is totally what I want! Bruce Brand on drums!!! It's like it's my birthday forever. This is the sound of a 'sploitation movie set in Soho in 1965: that beat sound, with her cool fire voice—this is a dream! Makes me wanna grab my deerstalker hat and get myself to a dancefloor! A great record by one of the talents of our times. (LG)
(Damaged Goods)

HAKAN –"III" LP

When the first song came on, I almost convinced myself it was the MARKED MEN, but it's not. What I'm saying here is that Italy's HAKAN don't stray far from the melodic punk blueprint that MARKED MEN certainly did not invent, but did perfect many years ago. Strong melodies, raw guitars, breakneck RAMONES-beat drumming and memorable songs. What I'm saying is that it's nothing new, but when it's done right, it still sounds really good. (GH)
(Brassneck / One Chord Wonder)

HETZE – "Bedbugs" LP

Blasting anxious hardcore from Belgium—there's a total FLEAS AND LICE vibe, but with deadly blast beats (when appropriate!) and a ferocity from the vocalist that almost makes you squirm in your seat. Then again, if you're still sitting after "Pile of Shit" is finished, then maybe *Bedbugs* ain't for you after all. The rest of us though: we gonna rage 'til we are fukkn dead, and HETZE is going to rage with us. Stripped Down Blistering EuroThrashCrust is officially a new subgenre. (WN)
(Fucking Kill)

THE HUNCHES – "Same New Thing" LP

Well, here's another wrong made right: part three in Almost Ready's

vault plundering of the late and oh-so-great HUNCHES. *Same New Thing* dusts off a recording session that predates their infamous debut—serving as a demo then, but offering a really cool glimpse into their (pretty stunning) process now, seventeen years (!) later. Anyone familiar with their debut album will recall the noise that coats each tune, but *Same New Thing* casts so many of those heart-wrenching moments as leaner and sometimes meaner than the more widely-heard versions. Formative takes on tunes like "Lisa Told Me" and "Explosion" really drive home just how smartly and furiously the HUNCHES crafted their songs. Tunes as fuckin' great as those would sound good underwater, yes, but they're magic here all the same. Related, there are serious kicks to be heard with their collective fandom shining through here: copious Cle-punk and Dee-Troit channeling, broken blues and glass-smash punky damage, firing all at once. No fuckin' wonder I was so smitten with them. Still am, it seems. One of the few true 21st century killers. Highly recommended! (MC)
(Almost Ready)

HYREVOGNENE – "Kone" EP

Punk Rock from Denmark!! It sounds very rough and angry, like the real abrasive shite you hope for when exploring the world-wide music. Maybe they did listen to the KBD even. They also have very dumb videos on the YouTube. Limited to 190 copies— sorry, you're too late. (GB)
(Mastermind)

IDIOTA CIVILIZZATO – "Sporchi Senza Fine" LP

Holy shit, how did I sleep on this 12" from Berlin's IDIOTA CIVILIZZATO? It's easily one of the best hardcore records from 2018. The band conveys the outta control wildness of early manic punks such as NEGAZIONE and CHEETAH CHROME MOTHERFUCKERS. The production amplifies the chaotic feeling a lot—everything is *sorta* clear, but sounds like it's just a smudge near being in the red. It results in a similar feeling as watching this sorta shit in a house show where there's too many people and everybody is knocking everything else over—the PA is on the floor, the band members slammed against their amps, the drummer losing entire pieces of their kit to the mania. A must have! (JD)
(Static Shock)

JERRYS FARSA – "Radhustyrann" CD

Took a bit of internet sleuthing, since there's bugger all in terms of addresses and websites and whatnot on their disc, but I think I can definitively say that they are Swedish. I'm always partial to folks singing in their native tongue, even if I haven't the foggiest what they're nattering on about. Musically, they play upbeat, melodic hardcore / pop punk type stuff, with lots of horns. Thankfully, no ska to speak of. Much more a NO USE FOR A NAME with brass, than say, I dunno, AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY. Believe me, I've heard considerably worse. (RK)
(self-released)

KARBORÄTOR – "Cease Fire" 10"

Crusty D-beat sludge from Orlando. Now, I call it sludge, but it never really gets all that slow. It's just got that heavy duty riffage, and a few stoner metal moments, but don't worry kids, the driving D-beat that we all love is always king here. It's as if IMPALERS got really into BRAINOIL and EYEHATEGOD. Throw in the sick hand-screened cover featuring snakes, skulls, and barbed wire and they've got me sold. (BA)
(Kickback)

KEEPERS – LP

This San Diego trio invite you down into the mire of lurching, sludgy noise punk. The rhythm section keeps things moving along like the drummer on a Viking ship, allowing the guitar to alternate between simplistic fuzzed-out riffs and psychedelic wanderings. The track "Beautiful Things" offers some let-up from the sonic onslaught with an almost post-punk danceability. If you like things heavy, this is worth seeking out. (AM)
(Volar)

KING FLAMINGO / NICO BONES – split EP

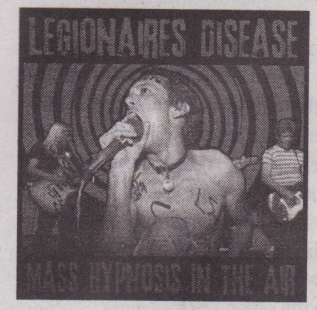
KING FLAMINGO get things going with some awesome local-fi power pop, which sort of reminds me of WHITE WIRES. Song number one is bare-bones garage rock with a definite '60s feel. Next up is a slower ballad with a certain DANIEL JOHNSTON quality, I'm not sure if it's the vocals or the sort of spacey effects they employ. Fresh off an an attempt to win *American Idol*, NICO BONES start side two with a peppy rockabilly-inspired number. They finish things off with a rocker that has definite doo-wop components, even starting off sounding like a cover of "Runaround Sue." I'm not sure I'd say any of the tracks are knock-your-socks-off outstanding, but they all keep your attention. Not bad. (KK)
(Outro)

LAZY CLASS – "Interesting Times" CD

This is street punk / Oi! from Poland with vocals in English. These guys have been around for about five years. This is decent and certainly anthemic in the vein of RANCID or the COCKNEY REJECTS, with a bit of MOTÖRHEAD-style rock. Although certainly not on those bands' level, this is pretty solid for crowded genre. (RL)
(TNT Tunes)

LEFTÖVER CRACK – "Leftöver Leftöver Crack: The E-Sides and F-Sides" CD

Unpopular opinion in 4, 3, 2, 1...LEFTÖVER CRACK are great. LEFTÖVER CRACK are important. LEFTÖVER CRACK still, in 2019, deserve so much more than the mall-meets-the-gutter status that the self-righteous punks bestow upon them, because context be damned, LEFTÖVER CRACK are fukkn great. A 30-track collection of EPs, splits and outtakes sequenced brilliantly—catchy punk, infectious ska-punk, anti-cop, anti-authority, anti-racist, pro-punk melodic punk. I don't know what else think you want from this subculture we all claim, but MINOR THREAT is a starter band too, you dig? You don't ditch your *Pay To Cum* EP just 'cause the suburban punk twerp rocks a BAD BRAINS shirt, do you? Just saying. Important punk is still important, and even though the kids like 'em, LEFTÖVER CRACK are still great. (WN)
(Fat Wreck)



LEGIONAIRES DISEASE – "Mass Hypnosis in the Air" CD

A compilation of all the LEGIONAIRES DISEASE recordings: the eight-song 1978 studio recording that the "Rather See You Dead (Than With Wool On Your Head)" 7" would come from, the four-song 1985 studio recording, and a thirteen-song live set from 1980 at Hurrah's in New York City. The tracks are rough and primitive, but with that compelling rawness of a punk band just having a great time. The CD booklet is really nice too. It starts out with an intro from U-Ron of REALLY RED describing LEGIONAIRES DISEASE's singer Jerry Anomie getting released from jail, going to see the SEX PISTOLS in San Antonio, and then coming back to Houston inspired and starting the band. The booklet is filled with photos, fliers, interviews, and remembrances. It is really nice collection of this wild first wave punk band. (CK)
(Hotbox Review)

TH' LOSIN STREAKS – "This Band Will Self-Destruct in T-Minus" LP

Has it really been fourteen years since the first TH' LOSIN STREAKS LP? Well, that certainly is too long to wait for a second album. During those lost years they may have discovered a time machine and gone to London to play some gigs at the Railway Hotel. *This Band Will Self-Destruct in T-Minus* has a mod-y garage rock feeling reminding me of a more restrained, early period the WHO. The songs are catchy. The guitar playing is punchy and crisp. Great album. (CK)
(Slovenly)

LOUIS LINGG AND THE BOMBS – "Kiiroichurippu: Hopeless Love in the Age of the Glitch" CD

Four new tracks, all sung in Japanese, from these long-standing Parisian pop punk techno ravers. While lyrically they're proudly in the CRASS anarcho-punk camp, at least on this effort, there's mercifully little of the ATARI TEENAGE RIOT electronica, and much more of the straight ahead speedy pop punk. Kinda like J CHURCH on 45 (as opposed to 33), albeit with a Parisian female chanteuse, singing in Japanese (though the whoa-oh-ohs manage to comfortably span the linguistic divide). Fantastic stuff. Self-released, so snap it up from the band. (RK)
(self-released)

MANDATES – "Dead in the Face" LP

This is a throwback. This is punk rock that is 100% rooted in rock'n'roll. The way it's delivered reminds me of the DEAD BOYS. It's faster-paced, it's got a sense of urgency, it's got lead guitar. The "Made in Canada" logo on the back cover doubles as a seal of approval, as Canadians are particularly good at power pop. As this one moves on, it definitely straddles that line between punk and power pop. There is absolutely nothing wrong with this. Outside of the quality of the recording, if someone told me this was from 1978, I'd totally believe that. Excellent. (KK)
(Dirty Flair / Teenage Rampage / This is Pop)

LISA MARR WITH THE TRANZMITORS – "In the Summer" EP

Right off the bat with a FASTBACKS cover—that there is some bold shit. LISA MARR has a great voice, and I love the TRANZMITORS, but I'm not sure they really did much of anything with this song. In my mind, if you're going to cover a great band like the FASTBACKS, you really need to do something with it. It kind of just sounds like a cover of "In the Summer." They also cover two CUB songs. I honestly don't know the originals, which might be better for me, as I have no reference point. My complaint about not doing anything with the A-cut aside, this is super poppy and catchy. It is *right* up my alley and I kind of love it. The one original is worthwhile and not at all dissimilar from the others. I can see myself listening to this over and over again. That voice! (KK)
(Top Drawer)

MELTING WALKMEN – "Daylight Savings" LP

Copenhagen's MELTING WALKMEN shift gears between energetic post-punk and somber lads staring at their shoes, but they mostly keep it upbeat. The dueling guitars work through varying degrees of dissonance that truly complement one another. The shouted vocals feel similar in each song, adding little dynamics, if any. In "Petrified" it sounds as if the singer is hearing the song for the first time and doesn't quite know what to do, but not in a cool, fun way. Anyhow, it's decent. The vocals bum me out, but the instrumentation is excellent. (GH)
(Don't Think Twice / Mastermind)

MIGHTY QUINN & THE OAKLAND RONIN – CD

Apparently, this band had a song played on an episode of "Scrubs," or at least its singer did. I wouldn't call this punk, maybe punky alternative? It reminds of early RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS before they became a household name on MTV. I was never into that CHILI PEPPERS or JANE'S ADDICTION "punk influenced" sound. Not bad but not my thing. Where's *Spin* when you need it? (RL)
(self-released)

NATURAL MAN & THE FLAMIN' HOT BAND – "Electrical Man" EP

The first song seemingly intentionally quotes directly from a DEVO song in the intro, then speeds into a birdcrash explosion of UKDIY Midwestern art school relentlessness. This definitely feels like a band that would have played with the EMBARRASSMENT in 1982. The second song is too funky for this hater, but I like the lyrics a lot: "*Don't ever trust your city to take care of you.*" Watch out for that Michigan water, no one else is! The music is a total wash over sound: there's no space, just a swathe of chants and sax and guitar tumble. Seems like the Midwest is alive with pleasure and here's some audio to take you there? (LG)
(Neck Chop)

NEGATIVE VIBES – "Broken Mind" CD

Nothing fancy here, just eighteen bursts of utterly fantastic hardcore punk—and if Poland's NEGATIVE VIBES are any indication, "fancy" is fukkn overrated. East Coast meets ACCÜSED vibe, these kids channel '80s USHC brilliantly and their doses of unadulterated fury are a breath of fresh air. (WN)
(TNT Tunes)

NEO NEOS – "Kill Someone You Hate" LP

Really obnoxious, generally speedy, one-man band type garbage can pop from the impressively—perhaps destructively—prolific NEO NEOS. Generally speaking, some songs are so purely conceived, they would sound great in any setting, with any kind of production value. These are not those songs. The joy (or anger) of this record comes from the fact it sounds like shit: a cacophony of useless punk made useful by sheer volume and repetition. It's a feat of will and hubris that's commendable. A good record. (MR)
(Neck Chop)

THE NEXT – "Mad House" CD

This band started in 1978, and played the Mabuhay during the club's early punk heyday of the late '70s. This a full-length of new songs which comes after a decades-long hiatus. A good mix of spunky punk and power pop songs. This reminds a lot of the BRIEFS, but there is a NEW YORK DOLLS quality at times as well. Good stuff. (RL)
(Die Laughing)

NO IDEA / NOLLKOMPETENZ – split LP

Bear with me y'all, this is one of those weird ones that came with very little info and required a bit of internet research that was mostly available in languages I don't speak. So it seems like Sweden's NO IDEA were around in the mid-'80s, only appearing on a relatively obscure cassette compilation during that time. This is brand new material, recorded some 32 years after their debut. It's very much in line with what you'd expect from a bunch of dudes who haven't been actively punk in three decades plus: awkward metal interludes, mediocre songs, and so forth. The vocals sound good at least. NOLLKOMPETENZ seem to be one of those admirable (but frustrating for an *MRR* reviewer) bands that don't have any internet presence so I can't tell you much about them but the tunes are pretty solid. They walk an interesting line, equal parts hardcore machismo, punk simplicity, and garage rock swagger, with some intentionally over the top guitar solos all held down by the super dirty bass and an extremely on-point drummer. NO IDEA are a write-off (though the '86 material was recently reissued on an EP and may be worth looking up) but NOLLKOMPETENZ are intriguing and well worth a listen. (AU)
(Just 4 Fun / Wounded)

NO STATIK – "Mysterious to Ourselves" LP

Exactly what you would expect from NO STATIK. Fast, heavy-hitting, punchy hardcore. *Mysterious to Ourselves* doesn't really lack anything that is hardcore, as it has all the tropes of a hardcore record: the blast, the fast, the chug, the breakdown. What has always stood out to me the most about NO STATIK is the cadence of frontperson Ruby. The way that anger, anxiety, and depression seem to just exude from the mic. They do get weird by adding some instrumental tracks to the end that serve as some soundscapes and noise, but in my opinion they could have gotten weirder. This record feels urgent and intense, the production is crystal clear, and the art is really fucking dope. I am assuming this is the last record from NO STATIK since they are billed as playing 1-2-3-4 Go! in Oakland with the tagline "say goodbye." (RS)
(Iron Lung)

ORGANA – LP

German anti-oppression powerviolence and grindcore that sounds like the industrial soundtrack to *Brazil* meets HIS HERO IS GONE, COMBATWOUNDEDVETERAN and the most downtrodden riffs from the CURE. Neo-crust breakdowns, blistering grindcore attacks, and open intermittent D-beat sections that are so brief you can't ignore their ingenuity. Gnarly charred vocals spew out lyrics in both German and English. Lyrical themes decry the ugly existence of fascism, racism, nationalism, sexism, and homophobia. ORGANA, lay down six brutal tracks through shattering noise and fury. Production is super heavy—well done. This is a one-sided LP with a circle of barbed wire etched on the other. (JR)
(Pike)

THE OUTTA SORTS – "Caligula" EP

Local garage punk of the swing-swang-swingin' variety. Real piss-in-yer-icetray stuff: foolish boppin', elder juvenile delinquency. The title track attempts to link Trump and Caligula via their penchant for grope violations and it only gets brainier from there (just kidding, it doesn't!). *"I fucked a devil and I made her cum!"* Ahem, well, OK, cool? (MC)
(Jester)

PARSNIP – "Feeling Small / Winter"

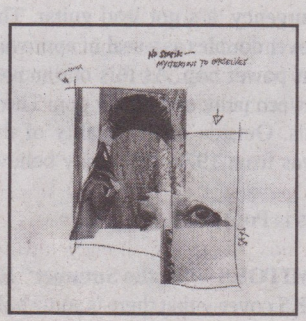
The first PARSNIP 45 was a total moment of mind loss for me: a true and total encapsulation of C86/TVP, '60s and '80s Mod Girl Dreams, umm, DOLLY MIXTURE if they were way punker…and here with the second we have more of the same! The first song is a perfect DAN TREACY meets DOLLY MIXTURE dreamscape! My mind was a plastic bag before the song was over!!! It sounds almost like the song is sort of writing itself as it goes along in a totally pop freedom manner, like listening to a SWELL MAPS 7" you dreamed of. Flip the disc over and there's this fucking perfect BANGS/PANDORAS pop garage song about the tyranny and delights of winter, what more would you want out of a 7'?! PARSNIP are a true and total delight, and I want fifty more 45s like this immediately, OK punkers? (LG)
(Zenith)

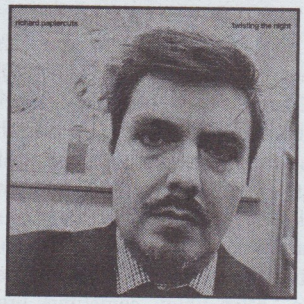
POŻOGA – "Wolfpack Attack" EP

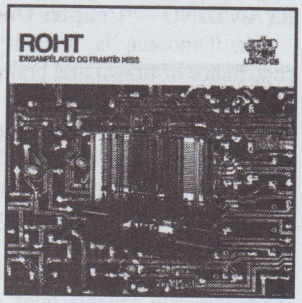
We got us a ripper right here. No shortage of driving riffs, barking vocals and straight up nassssty bass tone. I would call it D-beat leaning hardcore, with plenty of moshy parts, but nothing too derivative. The band would definitely fit well on a bill with the UK's ARMS RACE. Clear influence from GBH, VARUKERS, DISCHARGE, etc., and even reminded me a bit of BLOODKROW BUTCHER. There's also a pretty rocking cover of "No Hay Futuro" by Spain's RIP. The band is based out of Dublin, but comprised of immigrants from all over the world. (AT) (Distroy / Going Postal / Hidden Beauty / Seitan Hell Bike Punx / Senseless Acts of Anger / Tirano Intergalactico)

PRIORS – "New Pleasure" LP

Insistent, kinetic fuzzed-out punk pop. Itchy repetitive guitar riffs serve as foil to the just-this-side-of-annoying keyboard melodies that drive the songs. The vocalist's delivery is snotty yet deadpan, detached yet sneering: little







escapes their disdain. PRIORS pound their way through fourteen songs here, most of which come in around the two-minute mark, save for the epic title track, which despite its five-minute-plus is no slow burner. (AM)
(Slovenly)

Q – "Quiche" EP

I suspect that if I'd paid more attention to the "mysterious guy hardcore" bands à la HOAX and them, I'd have a better frame of reference to review this record, as Q seem to share those bands' self-destructive aggression and disinterest in sharing information. From my vantage point, Q are very much a band that fit in with the late '90s Pessimiser / Theologian scene. There are occasional blastbeats, tons of mid-to-slow tempo stomping riffs, and shrieked, nearly metal styled vocals while the guitars are pure hardcore punk. They could easily be slotted in on one of the *Cry Now, Cry Later* comps alongside heavy hitters like MAN IS THE BASTARD, STAPLED SHUT, or especially CATTLEPRESS. This is an odd, unsettling record, I haven't heard many like it. Worth checking out, especially for those with nostalgia for the powerviolence days. (AU)
(Lumpy)

QLOWSKI – "Pure as Fear" EP

Stylish and busy post-punk from Italy. There's an opposition in QLOWSKI's tunes: the keys and melodies are pure dancefloor new wave, but the beat and mood is far darker. I realize this is sorta thee bread & butter post-punk tactic, but it feels extra unnerving in this instance. The best moments recall BLACK SUNDAY, the worst I've already forgotten. (MC)
(Maple Death)

RED DELICIOUS – "Far From the Tree" EP

This is so good! Hardcore with tough and growly female vocals sung in Portuguese, sick riffs, and sludgy breakdowns. There's something old school about the vibe, with slower parts that almost have the kind of sassy, deliberate delivery of MINOR THREAT. The fast parts are brutal and fun at the same time, a combo that is sadly not as pervasive as one might hope. Listening to this record is the closest thing to being in a circle pit that you can do without actually moving. Every member of this band brings in cool, interesting elements. And they managed to cram eight tracks onto an EP. Don't miss this! (HB)
(Slugsalt)

RICHARD PAPIERCUTS – "Twisting the Night" 12"

Anyone who needs to read a review in order to determine whether to purchase this record almost certainly hasn't heard 2015's *IF*, the best LP of that year in my estimation, and probably one of the greatest of this dismal decade. This four-song 12" EP continues in the tradition of that record, which is to say it's wonderful. RICHARD PAPIERCUTS easily gives lie to the common punk fallacy that the best music is always made by those who don't know what they're doing—it frequently is, of course, but PAPIERCUTS proves it's possible to use an encyclopedic knowledge of music to create something unique, rather than cresting the wave of whatever flavor of nostalgia is in vogue this month. This is all to say that while I'm sure there are specific reference points on this record, it's hard to point them out because it's all melding into something of its own (and because they're probably largely bands I've never even heard of!). I can say that this record's got a more '80s pop lean to it than the last one: big sounds and big hooks and danceable rhythms. I can drop a reference to TEARS FOR FEARS or maybe even like PET SHOP BOYS or something (that one spoken line in "A Place to Stay"!). Or, just as impossibly, I can try to describe how this record makes me feel: peaceful, energized, optimistic—in a word, buoyant. But either approach is inadequate in conveying the beauty of *Twisting the Night*, a record that deserves to not just be heard, but to be listened to with focus and intent. (MF)
(ever/never)

ROHT – "Iðnsamfélagið Og Framtíð þess" LP

You should expect a monster, and you will receive a monster. Thunderous and monotonous and fully exposed, ROHT take punk and drag it into a dark dark place; like RUDIMENTARY PENI and PAILHEAD, they are playing the game but never playing by the rules. I suppose you can call this industrial hardcore or something like that, and they would fit as nicely (or poorly) on a bill with LARD as with DYS. I had every expectation that this record was going to be good as soon as it was announced. I didn't think it would be *this* good. (WN)
(Iron Lung)

RUIN BY DESIGN – "From Ashes to Empowerment" CD

DC punk with a definite RITES OF SPRING feeling, albeit more hardcore and with more gang vocals. The title appropriately encomases the vibe lyrically and musically. Lots of exclamations in the lyric sheet, emphasized *in all caps*. If the songs were longer, the vocals might be too grating, but they keep things on point just enough. I find their sound to be honest, and their lyrics relevant (albeit a little cheesy), which is more than I can say for many current bands I'm introduced to. (MA)
(23rd Turn)

THE RUSTY ROBOTS – "Sweethearts, Kisses, Bloody Knives" EP

Punkabilly ahhhh-go-go from fuckin' Leipzig, OK? Three tunes total, though I can hardly tell the difference between 'em. Total hairspray overdrive skull'n'bones schlock here, no new or embarrassing ground broken, so no real harm done. What does morning-after smoked fish and stout barf sound like? Probably this. (MC)
(Killjoy)

RUBELLA – "Gallows Humor" LP

According to press, Cleveland's RUBELLA has put out over 60 releases since 1998 and they're all a little different. On this vinyl release, the band consists of dense, minimalist synth with mostly plain, somber, clear vocalizations. There is a '90s 4AD Records feel to it, underscored by rumbling, low frequencies. The earnest vocal delivery sometimes reminds me of someone who had a past in folk-punk, but I don't think that is really the case here. Overall, a solid release for the synth crowd. (GH)
(Eleventh Hour)

RYAN DINO – "Chapter One: The Final Chapter" LP

Mr. Dinosaur is actually Mr. Bell: Atlanta wunderkind and contributor of brawn and brains to notable rulers such as PREDATOR and GG KING, to name but a few. "Chapter One: The Final Chapter" finds Ryan out front, collecting material from various sessions over the past few years, and completed with shifting line-ups. It's a uniformly kick-ass assemblage of material that's wonderfully varied: merging the expected expert-level punk with nods to DIY pop, tongue-in-cheek metal, dark hardcore, and atmospheric weirdness. It's epic from every angle, and a very deep-dive into the murky recesses of an extraordinarily capable punk brainiac—often funny, sometimes grim or damaged, always world class. It demands repeated listening and prompts a fair amount of obsession from the jump. Get lost. (MC)
(Scavenger Of Death)

THE SADISTS – CD

There are four catchy, early New York punk style songs on this CD. The singer has a bratty, whiny vocal style and the band is tight in a *Young Loud and Snotty* way. Yet, it's not annoyingly retro.Great stuff. They just need a better name. (CK)
(self-released)

S.B.F. – "Same Beat Forever" LP

Damn, they really weren't kidding. Programmed drums pretty much stick to the same beat the whole time, but this sounds raw and punk as fuck. Drum machines can create chaos; I don't know why some people aren't convinced of this. I'm hella in it when they do a more hardcore vibe, but sometimes they lose me with the more standard rock stuff. Luckily, this only happened twice, and this record goes hard as fuck pretty much the whole time. I would *really* love to hear this sound further developed and experimented with. I like this record a lot, but I'm even more interested to see where this could go. (HK)
(Neck Chop)

SCHEISSE MINNELLI – "Waking Up on Mistake Street" CD

Fairly prolific German skate punk that at their best recalls later RKL (whom Destiny also released back in the late '80s), though the production clearly dates this to the modern era. Not quite as show-offy musically as RKL, but there are lots of licks (from all instruments), and, like, the cover art is by Dan Sites who did literally all of the RKL artwork. The lyrics are junior high in quality, but not problematic or anything—just kinda goofy and about skating and shit, and occasionally surface-level political. I have a soft spot for stuff like this (and LOVE RKL) but I would probably enjoy them more live. (MA)
(Bernies / Destiny)

SHOCK – "Futur Noir" EP

I swear, some of my favorite hardcore records of the past few years have come from France, and Bordeaux's SHOCK doesn't disappoint. Heavy NYHC influence on this five-song EP, as well as some clear influence from NEGATIVE APPROACH, and maybe even BOSTON STRANGLER. Lots of driving riffs, a couple banging breakdowns on "Futur Noir," "Nuit de Brouillard," and the three-minute "Guirre a la Guerre," and some cool effects sprinkled in here and there. (AT)
(Destructure)

SICK OF IT ALL – "Wake the Sleeping Dragon!" CD

I saw these NYHC old timers last time through and they tore it up! This sounds pretty heavy and makes me want to find my hoodie and put my fist in the air. Great production, and classic hardcore from a band who could get away with slipping over time given their longevity, but who sound just as great as ever here! (RL)
(Fat Wreck)

SPAZZ – "Dwarf Jester Rising" CD

Debut full-length from West Bay legends, *Dwarf Jester Rising* clocks in under 25 minutes and their irreverent stamp on '90s hardcore is undeniable. Sample-laden guttural blasts, discordant dirges, this is what the kids call powerviolence, and it didn't start here, but this is when people outside of California started paying attention. *Dwarf Jester Rising* is important, to be sure, but it's also really fucking good. Favorite track: "Burning Tongue." (WN)
(Tankcrimes)

SPECTRE – "Out of Time" EP

SPECTRE play some surfy rockabilly. It's reverby and noodly as goes with that territory, but too straightforward and restrained for me. (CK)
(Killjoy)

SPIT – "Toxic Noise" LP

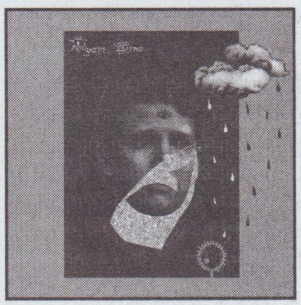
With nineteen songs ranging from twenty seconds to around two minutes, I think it's safe to say at least one of these skate-punk riffs will tickle your fancy. I would describe it as CIRCLE JERKS with some blast beats here and there. The vocals are kinda snotty like Keith Morris, but the riffs range from melodic to thrashy. It's kind of all over the place; still unsure of whether that's a good thing or a bad thing. (AT)
(Stanley Electronics)

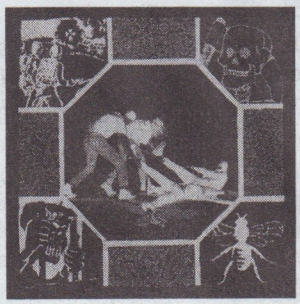
THE SUBURBAN HOMES – "EP 3" EP

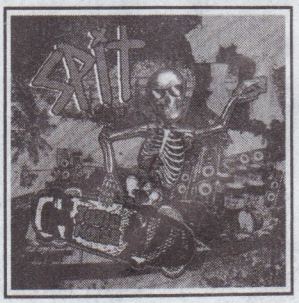
Originally intended as their second release, and as such a bit on the older side, this EP nevertheless represents one more broadside in the HOMES's attack on modern punk complacency. Definitely utilizing all the tools in the DESPERATE BICYCLES repair kit (the track "City Life" in particular borrows liberally from "Advice On Arrest"), they still manage to create something that feels now and vital. (AM)
(Neck Chop)

TIGHTWIRE – "Six Feet Deep" CD

A QUEERS / ATARIS / FIENDS-type pop punk band from Minneapolis that are a couple years old and play done-to-death. That said, it is done well. Being a trio, it's pretty straight forward musically, as the short songs are catchy, and the vocals are on key. For the pop punk elite only. (RL)
(Red Scare)







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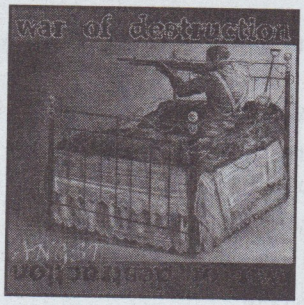

TØRSÖ – "Build and Break" EP

Holy shit y'all, a good fucking record released by Revelation Records in the year 2018! TØRSÖ join fellow Bay Area punkers PRIMAL RITE as the only cool, interesting band released by the legendary label in a dog's age. This is an excellent record: repping straightedge 2018 with a mix of classic mosh tendencies and a ton of driving Scandi-crust influence, made distinctive by both Mae's commanding vocals (making her one of the very, very few women to appear on a Rev release) and extremely tight arrangements. "Grab A Shovel" might be the best of the bunch, with a massive outro that absolutely devastates. Thanks to a top-shelf recording job everything sounds fantastic and even the art is interesting and relevant to the band instead of being a slapped-together computerized mess. (AU)
(Revelation)

TOTRAFFEN – "Ism" LP

An instant must-have: track after track of addictive mid-tempo Deutschpunk from a German expat punk in Western Australia. The dark tinges of EA80, SLIME-caliber vocals spewing fierce gravel, and there's something to be said for the brilliant simplicity of a catchy fukkn track with piles of backing vocals. Presented with a painstakingly constructed recording that's appropriately rough around the edges...this is great. (WN)
(Aktiver Ausstand In Plastik / AntiMachine / Attack / Pogohai / Sedum)

TROPICAL TRASH – "Southern Indiana Drone Footage" LP

Dissonant psychedelic noise freakers TROPICAL TRASH are back with a new LP and it is excellent. There are unexpected twists around every turn on this record, but it still feels wholly accessible to anyone who isn't already jamming down at the knob turner fest. The vocals sometimes have a *Daydream Nation*-era, blasé Thurston Moore vibe that works for them. Carefully constructed songs explode in different directions through bass-heavy riffs and non-standard instrumentation. For fans of early DREAMDECAY and THEUSAISAMONSTER. (GH)
(National Waste Products)

UNFAIR FIGHT – "False Walls" LP

Talented yet really campy hardcore, I guess they sound like STRUNG OUT? This kind of hardcore was never my thing and I am not going to start listening to it at 30. They have some interesting rhythms with some very intricate guitar and drums, but UNFAIR FIGHT couldn't really hold my attention. This record sounds like a hodgepodge of every hardcore / punk band from Epitaph and Fat Wreck Chords from the mid-2000s, and it is a bit anxiety inducing to me. (RS)
(self-released)

WAR OF DESTRUCTION – "Angst" LP

This is a legitimate shock. WAR OF DESTRUCTION, of course, were one of the earliest and best Danish hardcore bands, solidifying their place in the pantheon of European hardcore with the release of their self-titled EP in 1983. This EP is all new material, recorded in 2017, and get this: it fucking rips! Seriously, this is so much better than almost any similar new recording from an '80s hardcore band with original members that it's mind blowing! One song passes the 2:30 mark, everything is fucking fast, pissed, and super energetic, the vocals are vicious, the riffs are just as good as they were back in the day, the drumming is better than it ever was and some of these songs are as good or better than their '80s stuff! Fellow punx, I implore you: ignore the shit graphic design and skepticism that naturally follows when you see an old school band's new material. This is legitimately one of the best new records of the year. (AU)
(Mastermind)

WITCH FEVER – "Toothless / Daddy Pt.2"

Gritty rock'n'roll vibes that remind me of fatally tough '90s rockers like BABES IN TOYLAND and L7. High production value and undeniable talent on the part of the vocalist make the sound fall somewhere between the current wave of underground punk witchiness and radio-ready hard rock. The lyrics are explicitly about claiming empowerment, which is pretty excellent whether it's performed in a basement full of sweaty punks or a rock club full of regular people. (HB)
(Brassneck)

WLMRT – "Lube 2" EP

Fast, intense art punk with synth up front in the mix and maxed-out vocals. Even with the synth, freaky art riffs, and occasional group vocals, there's nothing tender about this, which is so refreshing. There are some super-catchy grooves worthy of being called "hooks" but they're buried in the mix in a very cool way that kind of sneaks up on you. Weird, angry, fun, and it seems like you could dance to it, or at least kind of flail around and shake spastically. (HB)
(Pleasance)

YOUNG SKULLS – "Bomb Train Blues / We're Gone"

This guitar-drums-organ trio of heavy-hitters from the likes of CHROME CRANKS and TRANS AM announce themselves with swagger. Two thick-necked, grinding garage rock numbers with the sweaty intensity of a rawer JOHN REIS project. (AM)
(Slovenly)

V/A – "Paris Is Burning" CD

Paris might be burning, but it sounds pretty damn good to these ears. Ten Parisian punk bands grace us with a couple of tracks each. Whether it's the UK SUBS-esque HUMAN DOG FOOD, the GBH-inflected BREAKOUT, or the ever-ebullient techno pop punkers LOUIS LINGG AND THE BOMBS, the standard is uniformly astonishingly high for a compilation. The moody goths yearning for the days of ALIEN SEX FIEND even have HARASSMENT to keep 'em happy. I guess this does make them all a bit European sounding. But then again, it is Paris for fuck's sake. Even better, this CD, brought to you by the trifecta of labels Sick My Duck, Sheekiz,and General Strike, is available for free from any of the featured bands, with a purchase of any of their other records. Given that this was sent in by LOUIS LINGG AND THE BOMBS, you ought to get it from them! (RK)
(General Strike / Sheekiz / Sick My Duck)

CONTACTS

500 Miles to Memphis: 500mtm.com

Aktiver Ausstand in Plastik: roymehl@freenet.de; akaipmailorder.blogspot.com

Almost Ready/Last Laugh: almostreadyrecords.com; 135 Huntington Street, Brooklyn, NY 11231

Anti-Machine: antimachinerecords.bandcamp.com

Area Pirata: areapirata.com

Belladonna:belladonna-records.com

Bigout: bigoutrecords.com

Bitter and Abusive Language: baal666.bandcamp.com

Black Water: blackwaterpdx.com

Brassneck: brassneckrecords.bigcartel.com

Burial Vault: facebook.com/deadmorticians

Butterscotch Stanley: butterscotchstanley.bandcamp.com

Columna: columnapunk@gmail.com

Damaged Goods: damaged-goods.co.uk

Desolate: desolaterecords.storeenvy.com

Destiny: destiny-tourbooking.com

Destructure: destructure.org

Die Laughing : dielaughingrecords.com

Dirt Cult: dirtcultrecords.bandcamp.com

Dirty Flair: dirtyflair-records.com

Dissekerad: facebook.com/dissekerad

Distroy: distroyrecords@gmail.com

DMDF: donnez-moidufeu.blogspot.com

Don't Think Twice: don't-thinktwice.com

Eastern Prawn: easternprawn.com

Eleventh Hour: 2300records.com

ever/never: evernever-records.bandcamp.com

Fat Wreck: fatwreck.com

Food Waste: foodwasterecs.wixsite.com

Fuck U: fuckurecords@dartybox.com

Fucking Kill: killchris70@googlemail.com

Glen Schenau: glenschenau.bandcamp.com

In The Red: intheredrecords.com

Iron Lung: ironlungrecords.bigcartel.com

Jerrys Farsa: jerrysfarsa.bandcamp.com

Jester: jester1992.bandcamp.com

Just 4 Fun: just4funrecords.bigcartel.com

Karborätor: karborator.bandcamp.com

Killjoy: killjoy-records.de; Postfach 301141, 04251 Leipzig, GERMANY

Last Hour: lasthourrecords.bandcamp.com

Legionaires Disease: legionairesdisease.bandcamp.com

Louis Lingg and the Bombs: louislinggandthebombs.bandcamp.com

Lumpy: lumpyrecords.com

Mastermind: mastermindrec.com

Mighty Quinn & The Oakland Ronin: mightquinnwalker.bandcamp.com

National Waste Products: nationalwasteproducts.bandcamp.com

Neck Chop: neckchoprecords.com; PO Box 5635, Fullerton, CA, 92838

No Glory: nogloryrecords.bandcamp.com

Not Like You: notlikeyourecords.com

Not Normal: notrormaltapes.storenvy.com

One Chord Wonder: ocwrecords.bandcamp.com

Outro: outrorecords.com; 9800 D Topanga Canyon Boulevard #299, Chatsworth, CA 91311

Phantom: phantom.tk

Pike: pikerecords.com

Pirates Press: piratespressrecords.com

Pleasance: pleasencerecords.com

Pogohai: pogohai-records.jimdo.com

Red Scare: redscare.net

Revelation: revelatonrecords.com; PO Box 5232, Huntington Beach CA 92615

Ruin By Design: ruinbydesign.bandcamp.com

Scavenger of Death: scavengerofdeathrecords.bandcamp.com

Sabotage: sabotagerecords.bandcamp.com

Sedum: schun77@gmx.de

Senseless Acts of Anger: nhumanpunk@riseup.net

Slovenly: slovenly.com

Slugsalt: slugsaltrex.com

Stanley Electronics: facebook.com/stanleyelectronics

Static Shock: staticshockrecords.bandcamp.com

Tankcrimes: tankcrimes.com

Teenage Rampage: teenagerampagerecords.com

Telephone Explosion: telephoneexplosion.com; 1077 Dundas Street W, Toronto, ON M6J 1W9, CANADA

This is Pop: thisispoprecords.com

Tirano Intergalactico: tiranointergalacticoprods@gmail.com

TNT Tunes: tnttunes.pl

Top Drawer: tdrecords.com

Volar: volarrecords.com

Voodoo Rhythm: voodoorhythm.com; Wankdorffeld-Strasse 92, 3014 Bern, SWITZERLAND

WereOpossum: wereopossum@gmail.com; 819 Hamilton Avenue, Chattanooga, TN 37405

Wounded: Box 193, 612 24 Finspang, SWEDEN

Zenith: parsniphq.bandcamp.com

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DEMOS

All cassettes and CD-Rs are reviewed in this section. Send yours to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA and include your contact information. Submissions without artwork will not be considered.

(EA) Eric Arnouville
(HK) Hungry Kat
(JR) Jason Ryan
(JD) Joan DeToro

ACCELA – *Demo* – Pummeling hardcore with vocals that are wild like BAD BRAINS but more demented and screechy. Enters your head like a knife. Songs are a whirlwind and before you know it they're over and they've gone everywhere you wanted them to. Feel free to wiggle around, punch the air, stomp, pogo, anything you can imagine. This is hardcore punk that puts the responsibility on the listener to make it what they want. Stumbling with rage! The last track is a furious midtempo attack in a very singular way—I didn't think there was much left to do with that vibe but here we are. I keep a very select number of cassettes around, and this one is sticking. I'm in love! (HK) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, accelahc.bandcamp.com)

AWFUL MAN / LIFE HACKS – This split tape features two Boston punk outfits signed to the great Dead Broke Records, home to some pretty satisfying garage / pop punk with an occasional tinge of Oi! I have to admit that when I was reading about these bands I became very confused as to who was who and what was what. According to a description from the label, AWFUL MAN is an incarnation of WITCHES WITH DICKS, which is another great Boston act that I've followed for years but obviously never bothered learning the musicians behind. What makes this more confusing is, apparently, AWFUL MAN has now broken up and these are their last songs. But, after breaking up they, with the exception of one member, formed a new band: LIFE HACKS. This made my brain hurt for about 20 minutes, but at least I had good music to listen to while that was happening. This is a solid release all the way through, and bounces between angry screams and cascading crash cymbals, like "More Often Than Not," and melodic, catchy moments like "HB." It's a lot of fun. (EA) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, deadbrokerekerds.bandcamp.com)

BIOFEEDBACK – *Hardtimes* – Appropriate timing for the reissue of this '94 release from the Philippines. Desperate hardcore in the riffs and vocal expression. The music is hella solid, but the vocals are what make this captivating. At some points the singer is just muttering shit really fast, you can just imagine spit all over the microphone, and at other points they sound really hopeless and vain. The band experiments with different sounds and tempos and all of them continue the mood perfectly. The band included a note stating this was reissued as a tribute to the drummer who died under police custody. With that context, this sounds super fucking relevant, much more so than any reissue that gets habitually mailed to *MRR*. Rest in power Cid Mendoza, your music lives. (HK) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, facebook.com/mutilatednoiserecords)

BOY(MOUTH) – *Welcome to Boy(mouth)* – Experimental electronics with pumping drum machine and nasty vocals. I think the vocals are why it's punk—I don't know, you tell me. Weeeird shit that I would be really into if the production was slicker. You can tell whoever makes this stuff spends more time creating than editing, which I can respect, but if they ever change that someone please let me know. I would love to see this live, sounds like a wild time. The cover is Mister Rogers with his middle fingers up, and I'm very happy about that. (HK) (3-song CD-R, lyrics not included, Rotten Princess, 1333 NE 71st, Portland, OR 97213)

CHERRI COLA – *Sleepy Hollow Diner* – If a picture of the band is gonna be your album cover, you better look pretty fucking cool. Luckily this band does it right. The song is pretty '90s alt rock but with a modern DIY punk flair. I'm going to assume this is their first recording, and the mixing and performances sound a bit like someone's first time using Audacity. But the songwriting is solid and the band has their shit together, so I'm quite interested to see how they'll approach a more complete release with better recording knowledge (it's all on Youtube, guys!). I can also appreciate that they included the guitar chords along with the lyrics—that should totally be a thing. (HK) (1-song CD-R, lyrics included, cherricola.bandcamp.com)

CHRIS CHAPPELL'S DISTORTION PEDAL – *Religion/Politics/Economics/Education* – Chris, if you read this, please take this constructive criticism. You've put in the time to burn 3-inch CDs and get them professional graphics and send a copy to MRR and whoever else. For your next release please use some of that time to learn how to mix better and to write more songs. Your song(s) aren't even bad, it's just literally impossible for me to get hyped on 3 minutes of music that sound like they were produced on an iPhone. (HK) (?-song 3-inch CD-R, lyrics not included, mark13records.com)

COQ / SEXUAL JEREMY – *Sex Tape* – The SEXUAL JEREMY side is a noisy avant-garde rock type of thing. Sounds like a band where everyone goes outside to take a break during their set except for a few who stay and vibe with it hard. Based on this tape I haven't decided which one I am. The sounds are pretty straightforward drums-bass-guitars-vocals and that might be the thing that limits them here, but at the same time they don't seem to care. COQ is also noisy no wave type stuff, but the grooves are *tiiiight*. The drums are pummeling and energetic the entire time, switching up without warning and letting the songs disintegrate when they need. The bass grooves and drums set up this band up for success, as the detached moans of the singer and the frantic noise of the guitar drive this sound straight into your throat. Also the BEATLES cover is spot on, just a warning. Very interested to see what this band could do with a longer format, more attention to the production, and whatever else is hopefully in the works. Good shit! (HK) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, crasslipsrecords.bandcamp.com)

CONTROL TEST – *No Me Digas Nada* – More punk than synth, but synthpunk nonetheless. This sounds really wild because it feels like the drums and vocals are in the next room over, but the synth is right there inside your ear. I'm imagining mesh shirts and neon jackets but in a circle pit. Hey, I get it, it's hard to decide which '80s aesthetic you want to stick with. This would be a cool soundtrack for a really punk 8-bit video game. Retro synth sounds totally add that top layer of weird that sets this stuff apart from whatever other bullshit you're into. I like I like! (HK) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, controltest.bandcamp.com)

CT-85 – Raging, *raging* punk!! Chaos,

violence, all the rest! I promise I have never heard anything like this. It's just so damn *fast* and the tape is blown out to shit. My faith in punk is revived every time I come across something this incredible. The drums are just pushing pushing pushing faster until it's just one sound. The bass and guitar are charging ahead and I don't even know what's going on. The vocals are a perfect sarcastic snarl that molds perfectly with the music. I just listened to this twice in a row and it could go another couple rounds. With everything else being perfect, of course the lyrics are on point as fuck. Talking shit on bosses, religion, and worst of all Punkboys. "Gay Landlord" is hella relatable too. (You ever heard of "woke-washing?" Come to San Francisco and see!) This masterpiece ends with a song about how fun it is to be punk, and it concludes with *thee* midtempo breakdown of the decade. I got teary-eyed when I heard that tempo switch, I am not fucking with you. Punk is the shit! "*Fuck everything you love we're having way more fun, this life don't make sense to you, we'd never want it to.*" (HK) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, notnormaltapes.bandcamp.com)

DEAD BRAINS – *Mental Disorder* – Hardcore punk and Oi! from the Philippines with lyrics in Tagalog. Pretty standard fare as far as packaging and music goes. This feels like a band I'd enjoy at the local venue rather than something to listen to at home. The singer goes by Johnny Deadbrains and I'm assuming that is the person in the band photo wearing a DEAD BRAINS shirt, and fuck it, might as well go big or go home. Putang ina mo. (HK) (9-song CD-R, lyrics included, deadbrains1234.blogspot.com)

DISARM – *Discography 1982-1987* – I mean come on, this is crucial Swedish stuff! This is a no-brainer tape for you D-beat / käng fans. Thirty-two tracks of quintessential Scandinavian hardcore. The first EP, *Dömd*, is a must have. The second is just as powerful with more echoing effects. The additional tracks are from comps, live records, and raw demo versions of both EPs. All sound great. DISARM was once TOTAL ARMSVETT, which you need also. (JR) (32-song cassette, lyrics not included, blacxkonflik.blogspot.com)

EX-KIDS – *Don't Grow Up* – I fell in love with Portland's EX-KIDS pretty much immediately: four AFAB people, all of whom sing, playing raucous, sassy pop music that sounds so separate from what everyone else is doing today. Like something that was supposed to be sent to a member of RAOOUL. This has none of the bite of the former band but it has all of their charm. Each of the vocalists adds their own charm, but my favorite is the vocalist that sounds like a sped-up BELINDA CARLISLE. Each song feels like a winner. Comes with a cool little zine featuring trivia about the four members Featuring ex-members of DOTTIE ATTIE, SLOPPY KISSES, and the LONELY. (JD) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, ex-kids.bandcamp.com)

FALSE FREEDOM – *Despite the Belief* – Hardcore punk with a lot of classic '80s type beats and riffs. Sick to know they've got hardcore bands out in Sonora! Living in the Bay can make you forget the value of having a band in your area doing justice to the '80s hardcore sound, but these punks are doing it right. Honestly most of the CD-Rs we get for review have cool music but the recording is little too dry and messy, like this one. But here's the common punk solution: make tapes, not CDs! Just dub those fuckers a little in the red and your record will be hyped for years. (HK) (13-song CD-R, lyrics included, falsefreedom.bandcamp.com)

FURIOSA PAZ – *Locura Empoderada* – Compelling Spanish punk that covers a lot of bases. Some high emotion moments on here, as well as some gothy post-punk sounding parts, but never straying too far from the classic driving Spanish punk we all love. Everything about this is quality, there aren't any lacking moments. I could be wrong, but the whole release sounds conceptual, as if the sequence and tracklist was intentionally created as a cohesive unit. I always have high expectations for anything coming out of Barcelona, and this one hit the spot. (HK) (8-song CD-R, lyrics not included, furiosapaz.bandcamp.com)

GARBAGE MAN – *Tobacco Bong Rips + Bonus Belinda* – This one was very interesting! The instrumentation of most of these tracks has a hardcore / metal fusion, complemented by the vocalist's searing melodic yells. It's really catchy and fun, with the sleaze and crust of something like a less absurd PLEASURE GALLOWS. (EA) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, personalmilitiarecords.bandcamp.com)

GLUE TRAPS – *Future Shocks* – I love meat and potatoes hardcore, and this band is like a perfect shot of punk insulin into my veins. These Maryland punks frantically rush through five songs in less than four minutes and it's just loud, fast chaos. Like I said, it's meat and potatoes, there's nothing to it, but it's very reminiscent of that OFFENDERS or S.O.A. sound that there can never really be enough of. I look forward to playing this on repeat in the upcoming months. (EA) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, gluetraps.bandcamp.com)

HAJ-PAJ / PSYCHO SIN – The PSYCHO SIN side is so lo-fi you can pretty much only hear the vocals and when the instrume—wait, there is a song with the title and lyrics "Yo, your girlfriend is a dude?" I'm not much interested in music that looks to affirm gender. The HAJ-PAJ side is also ultra lo-fi but you can hear the standard old school hardcore. It might have been recorded on someone's phone. This has the aesthetic of a band who found each other on Craigslist through a mutual love of beer and AGNOSTIC FRONT. (HK) (12-song 3-inch CD-R, lyrics not included, no contact info)

HELICAL SNOWFALL – *Motor Beach* – Fuzzy beach pop with drum machine. Songs are kinda cool, I just don't know if this production style captures the vibe of the music. Like, the guitar is fuzzed out and vocals are all hot and breathy, but the drum machine is just chillin in the back doing a basic beat. Makes the overall feel pretty stagnant, when the actual songwriting is waiting to come out of its shell and shine. Second song is actually great, wish the production was listenable. Props for the recycled box-turned-CD case. (HK) (2-song CD-R, lyrics not included, helicalsnowfall.bandcamp.com)

JOHNS – *Night Market* – Dark punk mixed with noise rock. Solid sounds all around, guitars sound good, songs are well-crafted, production on point. Definitely intended for fans of this sound, there isn't much innovation or outsider appeal. Pretty reverby and atmospheric, putting the emphasis on soundscapes rather than drum beats or riffs. Vocals are pretty desperate-sounding, which fits the overall vibe. No bells and whistles here, just a well-executed rendition of this genre. (HK) (11-song cassette, lyrics included, johns716.bandcamp.com)

JUG & THE BUGS / LEP – Two bands coming out of Hardyston Township, New Jersey. The JUG & THE BUGS side is very catchy, laid-back hypnagogic rock. There were a lot of standouts, namely the infectious opener "Itching," and the piano-laden "Entertain" which turns the style on its head for a bit, deconstructing the fundamentals of typical rock chord progressions. At the end of the day, however, they were all very similar-sounding indie tracks. The LEP side, on the other hand, kept me both interested and befuddled the whole way through. It starts with a track entitled "Challenge the Listener…" and I think that may have been a mission statement for these guys, in which case they pulled it off effortlessly. These five tracks were equal parts catchy, confusing, and incredibly cool. I couldn't pin down a specific genre or style, occasionally plugging in the guitars for a more rock-infused sound, while sometimes pulling out drum machines and synths for a more electronic feel. I can say with certainty, though, that "Gerbil Boogie" is a highlight track of the year for me. Both sides were really great listens, and the tonal difference of the sides play off each other nicely. (EA) (11-song cassette, lyrics not included, keeperrecords.bandcamp.com)

MISSING LIMBS – If you're looking for classic hardcore look somewhere else. This demo throws punches so unpredictably that before you know it you've been knocked on your ass! Snarling

DEMOS

DEMOS

vocals, nasty guitar and bass, and the drums barely holding it together. I couldn't even dance to this because I have no idea where shit is going next. The songs move at such a blazing speed it's impossible to catch your breath. It never ceases to amaze me when hardcore bands approach their music entirely different from any other hardcore band I've heard. Even within our limits, there are no limits! I already knew to expect grade A shit from the San Diego homies but damn, this is fresh as fuck. (HK) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, missinglimbs.bandcamp.com)

ODD – This reminded me of an even more diy FOX FACE or an angrier WHIP. Some really great anarcho-punk coming out of Québec with great vocals, thrashing guitars, and the middle-of-the-road recording quality that I love. I have nothing bad to say about this. (EA) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, oddpank.bandcamp.com)

PAPERBACK – *Big Feeling* – Will the '90s indie rock revival ever *finally* end? The three songs on this tape all feel like a desperate grab for same sort of fame and adoration that artists like SPEEDY ORTIZ have achieved. Yawn. The third track, "Cartoon Graveyard" feels slightly more interesting because it blatantly feels like a REPLACEMENTS ripoff, but unfortunately more of the *Pleased To Meet Me* era instead of *Sorry Ma, Forgot To Take Out The Trash*. Likely not the best fit for *MRR* readers but likely would excite *Stereogum* fans. (JD) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, paperbacktx.bandcamp.com)

SALIVA TRIBE – *Brown Napalm* – Fuuuuuck, what do I even say? Best punk of 2018, pure experience, this transcends any influences. Try it out when you're spitting on a yuppie, heartbroken on the bus, drinking 40s, pipe-bombing a new condo development, running from cops, it will work in all of these states of "living." If you're expecting to take a break at any point in the listen, turn it off now. I'm trying to identify what to compare this to and here's where I got: are those twangy blues riffs? Is the guitar tone supposed to be 80s Japanese hardcore noize? Is the bass playing chords? And holy shit, how much time did it take to come up with those drum parts? Reader, I would implore you to listen for your sake, but I am confident you do not give a shit. You will keep searching through y**t*be to expand your mediocre experience with music. If you ever meet me, I'll probably force you to borrow my copy of this tape. "*Just a chump walking down the street, no disguise, don't need permission to exist, I'm brown and from the tribe!*" (HK) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, salivatribe.bandcamp.com)

SHIT COFFINS – *Continuous Pleasure of Living* – Clobbering percussion and blown out hardcore from the Bay Area. Lead vocals tear through a dense wall of noise with extended powerful bellows. Backing vocals support with resolute punctuation. When I see this band name I immediately think of the RUDIMENTARY PENI track "Flesh Crucifix," and I'm hoping that is not a coincidence. Bouncing and blistering modulation within diminutive riffs. Lyrics focus on this almost unavoidable digital ID we've turned ourselves into, the overwhelming sensory overload that demise comes with, the false promises of basically everything, really, and finding solace in some semblance of self-respect. How can you not love the title, *Continuous Pleasure of Living*? "When you decide what you want to live for, if you even want to live at all!" Members of NO STATIK, NEEDLES, TALK IS POISON, NEGATIVE STANDARDS. Four tracks of relentless pummeling classic hardcore, with an especially distorted recording. (JR) (4-song cassette, lyrics included. shitcoffins.bandcamp.com)

STATIC HYMNS – *Auguries of Spark and Wire* – Industrial harsh noise project out of Charlotte. I get very emotional reading this person's note they have included, saying they love *MRR* because their heart is punk and they still want to do book reviews but haven't gotten a response. I am now aware this magazine has been given up on, and is past-tense. This tape is a perfect soundtrack to any moment in life where you have feelings of confusion, sadness, anger, and desperation. It doesn't feel like most noise projects where someone was dicking around with a mixer or whatever, this is a coherent release with mixes and performances that are well put together. Explorations of drone sounds as well as blown out beats, samples, and piercing synthesizers. (HK) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, statichymns.bandcamp.com)

THE STOOLS – *Milk River Blues* – Billed as "Detroit punk for chain-smokers and art students listening to Iggy Pop comeback albums," I was pretty on board with the general idea of this garage revivalist band. Though it's not as reminiscent of IGGY POP as advertised, there is some influence from those early garage groups here—the overdubbed claps and slow, heavy grooves are undeniable. The title track was the most enjoyable track here, a catchy two-chord jam with that low crunch coming out of the guitars and a howling chant from what sounds like two or three of the band members. "Don't Move a Muscle" and "Wrong Crowd" have that similar crunch and listenability, but are ultimately very run-of-the-mill garage tracks. Not that there's anything wrong with that. Good band name too. (EA) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, wfbr.bandcamp.com)

TV MOMS – *Believe Anything* – Do you know the feeling of looking at a robot that is so close to looking human that it's unsettling? So close to replicating the real thing, that you can't tell what the difference is but in the pit of your stomach you know it's different? This band gave me that feeling. They sound almost exactly like NIRVANA. The vocals are Kurt Cobain. Maybe this is their goal, and honestly it sounds good. There is just no way I could listen to this because I am staring this robot in the eyes knowing it will never take a shit. (HK) (12-song CD-R, lyrics not included, tvmoms.bandcamp.com)

ZED ZILCH – *(I'm Not) One Of The Boys b/w Cut Corners* – Twofer from Sam, owner of Feel It Records and member of FRIED EGG and CEMENT SHOES. Unlike those bands, this tape has a distinct late '70s feel to it. The production that feels like a CHEAP TRICK demo while the music itself would freak out fans of, say, the DEAD BOYS, *Damned Damned Damned*, and the ADVERTS. And the vocals have a distinctly British feel to them, smearing lines like "*Take a look at me and tell me what you think / Wasted romantics drunk on normalcy*." Both songs are fucking killer! Retro throwbacks while still sounding new and vital. I found myself flipping this tape over and over and over again—this project better keep putting out killer singles! (JD) (2-song cassette, lyrics included, feelitrecordshop.com)

V/A – *Compilation #3* – Crass Lips Records compilation here. If you're unfamiliar, they're a record label for the actual actual freaks who make impossible and weirdo sounds for the few who see truth. Touching on gender and other imaginative murderous structures, these artists all sound like they are celebrating the turd that is human life in the most bizarre truthful way. This comp shows how incredibly specific their scope is, while not one release sounds like another. I'm listening to this whole thing in my room and the vibe it's creating is unrelenting, dark, apocalyptic, hopeless and hopeful. They send *MRR* all their releases (we see you, we love you) and they give me hope that when I dig through the shit in the demo bin I will find the most putrid shit of all. (29-song CD-R, lyrics not included, crasslipsrecords.bandcamp.com)

V/A – *Symbolic Disruptions: DIY Punk and Post-Punk in 2018* – A compilation of mostly post-punk type stuff from the UK. As they would define it, there's heaps of rubbish in this comp as well as a few gems. Everything on it can definitely be identified as UK post-punk but the range is from more indie-rock TELEVISION PERSONALITIES stuff to more raw, distorted stuff you'd find on a JOY DIVISION record. Do people even listen to comps more than once? The range can be so wide and if it's on vinyl or tape it's pretty difficult to skip the shitty songs. If anything I mentioned interests you I'd recommend giving this a run through. (HK) (15-song cassette, lyrics not included, everymanhisownfootball.bandcamp.com)

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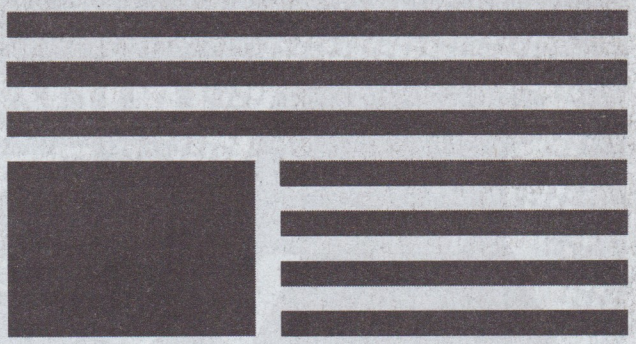

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